Timeless Truths for Everyday Living
An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind.
– Mohandas “Mahatma” Gandhi, leader for independence of India, pioneer of nonviolent civil disobedience (1869-1948)

Gossip needn’t be false to be evil — there’s a lot of truth that shouldn’t be passed around.
– Unknown

Friendship is like a bank account. You can’t continue to draw on it without making deposits.
– Unknown

Your life is your ship. You are the captain. Don’t let anyone else take the wheel.
– Michael Josephson, American ethicist, author and radio commentator, founder of CHARACTER COUNTS! and the Josephson Institute (b. 1942)

If you want to be successful, don’t give or take excuses.
– Florence Nightingale, English pioneer of nursing and health care reform (1820-1910)

Where there’s a will, there’s a way.
– Unknown

Oh what a tangled web we weave, When first we practice to deceive!
– Sir Walter Scott, Scottish novelist and poet (1771-1832)

Wisdom is knowing what to do next; virtue is doing it.
– David Starr Jordan, American scientist, Stanford University president, and peace activist (1851-1931)

Rather fail with honor than succeed by fraud.
– Sophocles, Greek playwright (496 B.C.-406 B.C)

A person who angers you conquers you.*
– Elizabeth Kenny, Australian nurse, pioneer in polio treatment (1886-1952)

The path of least resistance is what makes rivers run crooked.
– Elbert Hubbard, American businessman and author (1856-1915)

It is not what we eat but what we digest that makes us strong; not what we gain but what we save that makes us rich; not what we read but what we remember that makes us learned; and not what we profess but what we practice that gives us integrity.
– Francis Bacon, English statesman, writer and philosopher of science (1561-1626)

It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.
– Motto of the Christopher Society, which promotes positive media messages and stories

When things go wrong, don’t go with them.

It is better to be hated for what you are than to be loved for something you are not.
– Andre Gide, French writer, Nobel Prize-winning author (1869-1951)

There’s a big difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do.
– Potter Stewart, American Supreme Court justice (1915-1985)

Fame is a vapor, popularity an accident, riches take wing, and only character endures.
– Horace Greeley, American newspaper editor and politician (1811-1872)
1.2.18 It’s never too late to be what you might have been.
– George Eliot (Mary Anne Evans), British novelist (1819-1880)

1.2.19 Failing to plan is planning to fail.
– John Wooden, American college basketball coach (b. 1910)

1.2.20 Other people’s opinion of you does not have to become your reality.
– Lee Brown, African-American entrepreneur, motivational speaker, and author

1.2.21 There are two things you don’t want to be: a user or someone who is used.
– Michael Josephson, American ethicist, author, and radio commentator; founder of CHARACTER COUNTS! and the Josephson Institute (b. 1942)

1.2.22 Habits are first cobwebs, then cables.
– Spanish proverb

1.2.23 Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.

1.2.24 I will not permit people to narrow and degrade my soul by making me hate them.*
– Booker T. Washington, African-American educator, reformer, and founder of the Tuskegee Institute (1856-1915)

1.2.25 Every choice moves us closer to or farther away from something. Where are your choices taking your life?
– Eric Allenbaugh, American leadership consultant and author

1.2.26 Too many people are ready to carry the stool when the piano needs to be moved.
– Unknown

1.2.27 Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful.
– Samuel Johnson, English author and creator of one of the first dictionaries (1728-1784)

1.2.28 The strong man is not the good wrestler; the strong man is only the one who controls himself when he is angry.
– Muhammad, founder of Islam (c. 570-632)

1.2.29 It is nice to be important, but it is more important to be nice.
– Sir John Marks Templeton, American-born British financier (b. 1912)

1.2.30 If you’re not part of the solution, you’re part of the problem.

1.2.31 We don’t see things as they are. We see them as we are.
– Anaïs Nin, French-born American author (1903-1977)

1.2.32 Talk doesn’t cook rice.
– Chinese proverb

1.2.33 Manners are a sensitive awareness of the feelings of others. If you have that awareness, you have good manners, no matter what fork you use.
– Emily Post, American etiquette expert (1872-1960)

1.2.34 In matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock.
– Thomas Jefferson, Founding Father and 3rd U.S. president (1743-1826)

1.2.35 Life is a grindstone. Whether it grinds us down or polishes us up depends on us.
– L. Thomas Holdcroft, writer and theology professor

1.2.36 There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.
– L. Thomas Holdcroft, writer and theology professor

1.2.37 I expect to pass through this world but once. Any good, therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show to any fellow creature, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it for I shall not pass this way again.
– Stephen Grellet, Quaker clergyman (1773-1855)

1.2.38 If each person sweeps in front of his or her own door, the whole street is clean.
– Yiddish proverb

1.2.39 Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved.
– Helen Keller, blind and deaf American author and educator (1880-1968)
1.2.40 A bone to the dog is not charity. Charity is the bone shared with the dog when you are just as hungry as the dog.

1.2.41 I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, But still I can do something; And because I cannot do everything I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.
– Edward Everett Hale, American clergyman and author (1822-1909)

1.2.42 Don’t wait for your ship to come in. Swim out to it.
– Unknown

1.2.43 Winners are losers who got up and gave it one more try.
– Dennis DeYoung, American songwriter, member of the rock band Styx (b. 1947)

1.2.44 The surest way to ruin your life is to spend tomorrow’s happiness for today’s pleasure.
– Michael Josephson, American ethicist, author, and radio commentator; founder of CHARACTER COUNTS! and the Josephson Institute (b. 1942)

1.2.45 The vision must be followed by the venture. It is not enough to stare up the steps — we must step up the stairs.
– Vance Havner, American preacher (1901-1986)

1.2.46 In Germany they came first for the Communists, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn’t speak up because I wasn’t a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn’t speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time no one was left to speak up.
– Martin Niemøller, German submarine commander, pastor, and pacifist (1892-1984)

1.2.47 I complained that I had no shoes, until I met someone who had no feet.*
– Persian proverb

1.2.48 What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.
– Ralph Waldo Emerson, American philosopher and writer (1803-1882)

1.2.49 If you don’t want temptation to follow you, don’t act as if you are interested.
– Richard L. Evans, American religious leader and broadcaster (1906-1971)

1.2.50 I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.
– Maya Angelou, African-American poet and author (b. 1928)

* We have modified this maxim slightly so that it applies to both genders.