

Alain de Botton Quotes

*People, Thinking, Book, Believe, Writing, Art, Ideas, Beautiful, May, Self, Mind,
Anxiety, World, Envy, Pain, Mean, Home, Might, Lying, Men*

You normally have to be bashed about a bit by life to see the point of daffodils, sunsets and uneventful nice days.

~Alain de Botton

Do you love me enough that I may be weak with you? Everyone loves strength, but do you love me for my weakness? That is the real test.

~Alain de Botton

The challenge for a human now is to be more interesting to another than his or her smartphone.

~Alain de Botton

There is no such thing as work-life balance. Everything worth fighting for unbalances your life.

~Alain de Botton

Anyone who isn't embarrassed of who they were last year probably isn't learning enough.

~Alain de Botton

Intimacy is the capacity to be rather weird with someone - and finding that that's ok with them.

~Alain de Botton

Don't despair: despair suggests you are in total control and know what is coming. You don't - surrender to events with hope.

~Alain de Botton

One of the better guarantors of ending up in a good relationship: an advanced capacity to be alone.

~Alain de Botton

To one's enemies: "I hate myself more than you ever could.

~Alain de Botton

The only people we can think of as normal are those we don't yet know very well.

~Alain de Botton

We don't really learn anything properly until there is a problem, until we are in pain, until something fails to go as we had hoped ... We suffer, therefore we think.

~Alain de Botton

Forgiveness requires a sense that bad behaviour is a sign of suffering rather than malice.

~Alain de Botton

A good half of the art of living is resilience.

~Alain de Botton

Socrates, on being insulted in the marketplace, asked by a passerby, "Don't you worry about being called names?" retorted, "Why? Do you think I should resent it if an ass had kicked me?"

~Alain de Botton

We often lose our tempers not with those who are actually to blame; just with those who love us enough to forgive us our foul moods.

~Alain de Botton

I learnt to stop fantasising about the perfect job or the perfect relationship because that can actually be an excuse for not living.

~Alain de Botton

Though it may feel otherwise, enjoying life is no more dangerous than apprehending it with continuous anxiety and gloom.

~Alain de Botton

The largest part of what we call 'personality' is determined by how

we've opted to defend ourselves against anxiety and sadness".

~Alain de Botton

Everyone returns us to a different sense of ourselves, for we become a little of who they think we are.

~Alain de Botton

Maturity: the confidence to have no opinions on many things.

~Alain de Botton

Most of us still caged within careers chosen for us by our not entirely worldly 18-22 year old selves.

~Alain de Botton

The difference between hope and despair is a different way of telling stories from the same facts.

~Alain de Botton

Feeling lost, crazy and desperate belongs to a good life as much as optimism, certainty and reason.

~Alain de Botton

The only way to be happy is to realise how much depends on how you look at things

~Alain de Botton

Everyone wants a better life: very few of us want to be better people.

~Alain de Botton

Most anger stems from feelings of weakness, sadness and fear: hard to remember when one is at the receiving end of its defiant roar.

~Alain de Botton

Being content is perhaps no less easy than playing the violin well: and

requires no less practice.

~Alain de Botton

Every time we feel satisfied with what we have, we can be counted as rich, however little we may actually possess.

~Alain de Botton

Most of our childhood is stored not in photos, but in certain biscuits, lights of day, smells, textures of carpet.

~Alain de Botton

Mental health: having enough safe places in your mind for your thoughts to settle.

~Alain de Botton

As adults, we try to develop the character traits that would have rescued our parents.

~Alain de Botton

Envy: a confused, tangled guide to one's own ambitions.

~Alain de Botton

Maturity: knowing where you're crazy, trying to warn others of the fact and striving to keep yourself under control.

~Alain de Botton

Work is most fulfilling when you're at the comfortable, exciting edge of not quite knowing what you are doing.

~Alain de Botton

We are all more intelligent than we are capable, and awareness of the insanity of love has never saved anyone from the disease.

~Alain de Botton

Although I don't believe in God, Bach's music shows me what a love of God must feel like.

~Alain de Botton

The best cure for one's bad tendencies is to see them in action in another person.

~Alain de Botton

We keep a special place in our hearts for people who refuse to be impressed by us.

~Alain de Botton

We should not feel embarrassed by our difficulties, only by our failure to grow anything beautiful from them.

~Alain de Botton

It is by finding out what something is not that one comes closest to understanding what it is.

~Alain de Botton

True love is a lack of desire to check one's smartphone in another's presence.

~Alain de Botton

Work finally begins when the fear of doing nothing exceeds the fear of doing it badly.

~Alain de Botton

Must being in love always mean being in pain?

~Alain de Botton

Art holds out the promise of inner wholeness.

~Alain de Botton

Literature deserves its prestige for one reason above all others - because it's a tool to help us live and die with a little bit more wisdom, goodness, and sanity.

~Alain de Botton

There's a whole category of people who miss out by not allowing themselves to be weird enough.

~Alain de Botton

An argument in a couple: 2 people attempting to introduce each other to important truths - by panicked shouting.

~Alain de Botton

The blunt large questions become connected to smaller, apparently esoteric ones.

~Alain de Botton

One rarely falls in love without being as much attracted to what is interestingly wrong with someone as what is objectively healthy.

~Alain de Botton

Paying tax should be framed as a glorious civic duty worthy of gratitude - not a punishment for making money.

~Alain de Botton

Intuition is unconscious accumulated experience informing judgement in real time.

~Alain de Botton

Arguments are like eels: however logical, they may slip from the minds weak grasp unless fixed there by imagery and style.

~Alain de Botton

People only get really interesting when they start to rattle the bars of

their cages.

~Alain de Botton

People who readily accept the need for a gym will resist that their personalities might need some work too.

~Alain de Botton

There is real danger of a disconnect between what's on your business card and who you are deep inside, and it's not a disconnect that the world is ready to be patient with.

~Alain de Botton

Our responses to the world are crucially moulded by the company we keep, for we temper our curiosity to fit in with the expectations of others.

~Alain de Botton

The good parent: someone who doesn't mind, for a time, being hated by their children.

~Alain de Botton

As victims of hurt, we frequently don't bring up what ails us, because so many wounds look absurd in the light of day.

~Alain de Botton

It was no longer her absence that wounded me, but my growing indifference to it. Forgetting, however calming, was also a reminder of infidelity to what I had at one time held so dear.

~Alain de Botton

Curiosity takes ignorance seriously - and is confident enough to admit when it's in the dark. It is aware of not knowing. And then it sets out to do something about it.

~Alain de Botton

Getting to the top has an unfortunate tendency to persuade people that the system is OK after all.

~Alain de Botton

It is in books, poems, paintings which often give us the confidence to take seriously feelings in ourselves that we might otherwise never have thought to acknowledge.

~Alain de Botton

Reputation matters so much only because people so seldom think for themselves.

~Alain de Botton

Most of what makes a book 'good' is that we are reading it at the right moment for us.

~Alain de Botton

Journeys are the midwives of thought. Few places are more conducive to internal conversations than moving planes, ships or trains.

~Alain de Botton

Let death find us as we are building up our matchstick protests against its waves.

~Alain de Botton

Our disrespect for thinking: someone sitting in a chair, gazing out of a window blankly, always described as 'doing nothing'.

~Alain de Botton

The real issue is not whether baking biscuits is meaningful, but the extent to which the activity can seem to be so after it has been continuously stretched and subdivided across five thousand lives.

~Alain de Botton

There is a devilishly direct relationship between the significance of an idea and how nervous we become at the prospect of having to think about it.

~Alain de Botton

The moment we cry in a film is not when things are sad but when they turn out to be more beautiful than we expected them to be.

~Alain de Botton

Bitterness: anger that forgot where it came from.

~Alain de Botton

I assemble my ideas in pieces on a computer file, then gradually find a place for them on a piece of scaffolding I erect.

~Alain de Botton

In the gap between who we wish one day to be and who we are at present, must come pain, anxiety, envy and humiliation.

~Alain de Botton

One of the best protections against disappointment is to have a lot going on.

~Alain de Botton

Never too late to learn some embarrassingly basic, stupidly obvious things about oneself.

~Alain de Botton

A notorious inability to express emotions makes human beings the only animals capable of suicide.

~Alain de Botton

Once I began to consider everything as being of potential interest, objects released latent layers of value.

~Alain de Botton

The very act of drawing an object, however badly, swiftly takes the drawer from a woolly sense of what the object looks like to a precise awareness of its component parts and particularities.

~Alain de Botton

One's doing well if age improves even slightly one's capacity to hold on to that vital truism: "This too shall pass."

~Alain de Botton

You have to be quite heavily invested in someone to do them the honour of telling them you're annoyed with them.

~Alain de Botton

It would be foolish to describe the logistics hub as merely ugly, for it has the horrifying, soulless, immaculate beauty characteristic of many of the workplaces of the modern world.

~Alain de Botton

I think people want to get married to end their emotional uncertainty. In a way, they want to end powerful feelings, or certainly the negative ones.

~Alain de Botton

Dreams reveal we never quite get 'over' anything: it's all still in there somewhere.

~Alain de Botton

I'm also interested in the modern suggestion that you can have a combination of love and sex in a marriage - which no previous society has ever believed.

~Alain de Botton

I am conscious of trying to stretch the boundaries of non-fiction writing. It's always surprised me how little attention many non-fiction writers pay to the formal aspects of their work.

~Alain de Botton

Without sex, we would be dangerously invulnerable. We might believe we were not ridiculous. We wouldn't know rejection and humiliation so intimately.

~Alain de Botton

A virtuous, ordinary life, striving for wisdom but never far from folly, is achievement enough.

~Alain de Botton

There may be significant things to learn about people by looking at what annoys them most.

~Alain de Botton

The company of certain people may excite our generosity and sensitivity, while that of others awakens our competitiveness and envy.

~Alain de Botton

Forcing people to eat together is an effective way to promote tolerance.

~Alain de Botton

Unhappiness can stem from having only one perspective to play with.

~Alain de Botton

Newspapers are being read all around. The point is not, of course, to glean new information, but rather to coax the mind out of its sleep-induced introspective temper.

~Alain de Botton

The fear of saying something stupid (which stupid people never have) has censored far more good ideas than bad ones.

~Alain de Botton

It's clear to me that there is no good reason for many philosophy books to sound as complicated as they do.

~Alain de Botton

Status anxiety definitely exists at a political level. Many Iraqis were annoyed with the US essentially for reasons of status: for not showing them respect, for humiliating them.

~Alain de Botton

Booksellers are the most valuable destination for the lonely, given the numbers of books that were written because authors couldn't find anyone to talk to.

~Alain de Botton

It's hard loving those who don't much like themselves: "If you're so great, why would you think I'm so great.

~Alain de Botton

Our bodies hold our minds hostage to their whims and rhythms.

~Alain de Botton

Artistic accounts involve severe abbreviations of what reality will force upon us.

~Alain de Botton

Kant and Hegel are interesting thinkers. But I am happy to insist that they are also terrible writers.

~Alain de Botton

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