

# Donald Hall Quotes

*Writing, Baseball, Goal, Years, Summer, Thinking, Glasses, Loss, Eye, Wish,  
Horse, Important, Grief, Together, Done, Football, Sea, Notion, Pleasure, Home*

We learned how to love each other by loving together good things wholly outside each other.

~Donald Hall

Mere literary talent is common; what is rare is endurance, the continuing desire to work hard at writing.

~Donald Hall

Baseball is continuous, like nothing else among American things, an endless game of repeated summers, joining the long generations of all the fathers and all the sons.

~Donald Hall

If work is no antidote to death, nor a denial of it, death is a powerful stimulus to work. Get done what you can.

~Donald Hall

Great literature, if we read it well, opens us up to the world and makes us more sensitive to it, as if we acquired eyes that could see through things and ears that could hear smaller sounds.

~Donald Hall

Baseball is fathers and sons. Football is brothers beating each other up in the backyard.

~Donald Hall

Baseball, because of its continuity over the space of America and the time of America, is a place where memory gathers.

~Donald Hall

You think that their dying is the worst thing that could happen. Then they stay dead.

~Donald Hall

If the poet wants to be a poet, the poet must force the poet to revise. If the poet doesn't wish to revise, let the poet abandon poetry and take up stamp-collecting or real estate.

~Donald Hall

To desire to write poems that endure-we undertake such a goal certain of two things: that in all likelihood we will fail, and if we succeed we will never know it

~Donald Hall

If our goal is to write poetry, the only way we are likely to be any good is to try to be as great as the best.

~Donald Hall

The greatest kindness would put a bullet in his bright eye.

~Donald Hall

For most baseball fans, maybe oldest is always best. We love baseball because it seizes and retains the past, like the snowy village inside a glass paperweight.

~Donald Hall

I see no reason to spend your life writing poems unless your goal is to write great poems.

~Donald Hall

Sweet death, small son, our instrument  
Of immortality, Your cries and  
hungers document Our bodily decay.

~Donald Hall

I don't know where a poem comes from until after I've lived with it a long time. I've a notion that a poem comes from absolutely everything that every happened to you.

~Donald Hall

Your presence in this house is almost as painful and enormous as your absence.

~Donald Hall

Words seem like drops of water in a stream that has its own wholeness and its own motion.

~Donald Hall

Poetry is what I've done my whole life. And every important thing in my life had found itself into poems.

~Donald Hall

Opposites are attracted when each one is anxious about its own character.

~Donald Hall

The pleasure we feel, reading a poem, is our assurance of its integrity.

~Donald Hall

I want to sleep like the birds then wake to write you again without hope that you read me.

~Donald Hall

To grow old is to lose everything.

~Donald Hall

I wish you were that birch rising from the clump behind you, and I the gray oak alongside.

~Donald Hall

Of course newspaper sportswriting is mostly terrible - and of course it is usually the best writing in the paper.

~Donald Hall

But Blake's voices returned to dictate revisions.

~Donald Hall

The form of free verse is as binding and as liberating as the form of a rondeau.

~Donald Hall

Joe DiMaggio batting sometimes gave the impression, the suggestion that the old rules and dimensions of baseball no longer applied to him, and that the game had at last grown unfairly easy.

~Donald Hall

Generation on generation, your neck rubbed the windowsill of the stall, smoothing the wood as the sea smooths glass.

~Donald Hall

We made in those days tiny identical rooms inside our bodies which the men who uncover our graves will find in a thousand years shining and whole.

~Donald Hall

Can build plane... Delivery about three months.

~Donald Hall

Less is more, in prose as in architecture.

~Donald Hall

Today when I begin writing I'm aware: something that I don't understand drives this engine.

~Donald Hall

When we put words together - adjective with noun, noun with verb, verb with object - we start to talk to each other.

~Donald Hall

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