

Etty Hillesum

Quotes

*Thinking, Writing, Peace, Fighting, Worry, Believe, Suffering, Trying,
Determination, Men, Hands, Gratitude, Sake, Would Be, Acceptance, Eye,
Feelings, Simple, Creativity, Prayer*

Sometimes the most important thing in a whole day is the rest we take between two deep breaths, or the turning inwards in prayer for five short minutes.

~Etty Hillesum

As life becomes harder and more threatening, it also becomes richer, because the fewer expectations we have, the more good things of life become unexpected gifts that we accept with gratitude.

~Etty Hillesum

Despite everything, life is full of beauty and meaning.

~Etty Hillesum

We should be willing to act as a balm for all wounds.

~Etty Hillesum

Such words as 'God' and 'Death' and 'Suffering' and 'Eternity' are best forgotten. We have to become as simple and as wordless as the growing corn or the falling rain. We must just be.

~Etty Hillesum

Never give up, never escape, take everything in, and perhaps suffer, that's not too awful either, but never, never give up.

~Etty Hillesum

Each of us must turn inward and destroy in himself all that he thinks he ought to destroy in others.

~Etty Hillesum

That I should die next week, I would still be able to sit at my desk all week and study with perfect equanimity, for I know now that life and death make a meaningful whole.

~Etty Hillesum

I don't want to be anything special. I only want to try to be true to that in me which seeks to fulfill its promise.

~Etty Hillesum

There are moments when I feel like giving up or giving in, but I soon rally again and do my duty as I see it: to keep the spark of life inside me ablaze.

~Etty Hillesum

How rash to assert that man shapes his own destiny. All he can do is determine his inner responses.

~Etty Hillesum

I don't think I have nerves of steel, far from it, but I can certainly stand up to things. I am not afraid to look suffering straight in the eyes.

~Etty Hillesum

The more peace there is in us, the more peace there will be in our troubled world.

~Etty Hillesum

And now that I don't want to own anything any more and am free, now I suddenly own everything, now my inner riches are immeasurable.

~Etty Hillesum

One must also accept that one has 'uncreative' moments. The more honestly one can accept that, the quicker these moments will pass.

~Etty Hillesum

I do believe it is possible to create, even without ever writing a word or painting a picture, by simply molding one's inner life. And that too is a deed.

~Etty Hillesum

Every word born of an inner necessity - writing must never be anything else.

~Etty Hillesum

If one finds the strength to deal with small things, one finds it to deal with the large ones as well.

~Etty Hillesum

That fear of missing out on things makes you miss out on everything.

~Etty Hillesum

Life cannot be captured in a few axioms. And that is just what I keep trying to do. But it won't work, for life is full of endless nuances and cannot be captured in just a few formulae.

~Etty Hillesum

To live fully, outwardly and inwardly, not to ignore the external reality for the sake of the inner life, or the reverse, that's quite a task

~Etty Hillesum

Suffering has always been with us; does it really matter in what form it comes? All that matters is how we bear it and how we fit it into our lives.

~Etty Hillesum

Life is good, after all...and that's what stays with me, even now, even when I'm about to be packed off to Poland.

~Etty Hillesum

Sometimes I try my hand at turning out small profundities and uncertain short stories, but I always end up with just one single word: God.

~Etty Hillesum

Our desire must be like a slow and stately ship, sailing across endless

oceans, never in search of safe anchorage. Then suddenly, unexpectedly, it will find mooring for a moment.

~Etty Hillesum

The externals are simply so many props; everything we need is within us.

~Etty Hillesum

I know and share the many sorrows a human being can experience, but I do not cling to them; they pass through me, like life itself, as a broad eternal stream...and life continues.

~Etty Hillesum

We have to fight them daily, like fleas, those many small worries about the morrow, for they sap our energies.

~Etty Hillesum

Greed probably figures in my intellectual life as well, as I attempt to absorb a massive amount of information with consequent mental indigestion.

~Etty Hillesum

Everything is chance, or nothing is chance. If I believed the first, I would be unable to live on, but I am not yet fully convinced of the second.

~Etty Hillesum

I think what weakens people most is fear of wasting their strength.

~Etty Hillesum

I'm afraid I did not pray hard enough last night.

~Etty Hillesum

I would be so exhausted by my determination that I had no strength left to do the actual work.

~Etty Hillesum

Here, beside this great black surface that is my desk, I feel as though I am on a desert island.

~Etty Hillesum

After each creative act one has to be sustained by one's strength of character, by a moral sense, by I don't know what, lest one tumble.

~Etty Hillesum

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