

John Cleese Quotes

*People, Thinking, Writing, Creativity, Want, Creative, Sarcastic, Funny, Years,
Ideas, Laughter, Long, Mean, Giving, Laughing, Play, Believe, Two, Comedy,
Trying*

The very essence of playfulness is an openness to anything that may happen, the feeling that whatever happens, it's okay... you're either free to play, or you're not.

~John Cleese

What have the Romans ever done for us?

~John Cleese

All right, but apart from the sanitation, medicine, education, wine, public order, irrigation, roads, the fresh water system and public health, what have the Romans ever done for us?

~John Cleese

You don't have to be the Dalai Lama to tell people that life's about change.

~John Cleese

Creativity is not a talent. It is a way of operating.

~John Cleese

Come to me. I want to plow you like a Calgary driveway at Christmas.

~John Cleese

A wonderful thing about true laughter is that it just destroys any kind of system of dividing people.

~John Cleese

If God did not intend for us to eat animals, then why did he make them out of meat?

~John Cleese

Creativity is not the possession of some special talent. It's about the willingness to play.

~John Cleese

When you're being stalked by an angry mob with raspberries, the first thing to do is to release a tiger.

~John Cleese

This is the extraordinary thing about creativity: If just you keep your mind resting against the subject in a friendly but persistent way, sooner or later you will get a reward from your unconscious.

~John Cleese

Nothing will stop you being creative more effectively as the fear of making a mistake.

~John Cleese

No hope for planet at all. But I will be gone before the planet is gone, so it's your problem.

~John Cleese

The World is insane. With tiny spots of sanity, here and there... Not the other way around!

~John Cleese

I can certainly see that you know your wine. Most of the guests who stay here wouldn't know the difference between Bordeaux and Claret.

~John Cleese

The most creative people have this childlike facility to play.

~John Cleese

Oh, I could spend my life having this conversation - look - please try to understand before one of us dies

~John Cleese

The most creative people have learned to tolerate the slight discomfort of indecision for much longer and so, just because they put in more

pondering time, their solutions are more creative.

~John Cleese

If I can get you to laugh with me, you like me better, which makes you open to my ideas

~John Cleese

If you want to know who your friends are, have a major failure.

~John Cleese

If you want creative workers, give them enough time to play.

~John Cleese

I can do anything I want, I'm eccentric!

~John Cleese

When you do comedy in front of an audience, they are the ones who tell you whether it's funny or not and which bits are funny and which bits need to be fixed.

~John Cleese

It's only on the brink that people find the will to change. Only at the precipice do we evolve.

~John Cleese

Life is a terminal disease, and it is sexually transmitted.

~John Cleese

Aping urbanity, Oozing with vanity, Plump as a manatee, Faking humanity, Intellectual inanity, Journalistic calamity, Fox Noise insanity, You're a profanity, Hannity.

~John Cleese

He who laughs most, learns best.

~John Cleese

Don't let anyone tell you what you ought to like.

~John Cleese

To be creative you must create a space for yourself where you can be undisturbed... separate from everyday concerns.

~John Cleese

When I was in school, I was beaten every 30 minutes. It never did me any harm except for some psychological mal-adjustments and blurred vision.

~John Cleese

There's nothing good on the television; let's burn a witch. It must have been terribly exciting to live in those times.

~John Cleese

We don't know where we get our ideas from. What we do know is that we do not get them from our laptops.

~John Cleese

How to defend yourself against a banana

~John Cleese

Comedy always works best when it is mean-spirited.

~John Cleese

A man will give up almost anything except his suffering.

~John Cleese

The English contribution to world cuisine: the chip.

~John Cleese

Don't let anyone tell you what you ought to like... Some wines that some experts think are absolutely exquisite don't appeal to me at all.

~John Cleese

If you are leaping a ravine, the moment of takeoff is a bad time to be considering alternative strategies.

~John Cleese

Bureaucrats shouldn't be in charge of comedy.

~John Cleese

Some actors, I think, want to feel that they are as creative as the writer. And the answer is, frankly, they're not.

~John Cleese

A satisfied customer. We should have him stuffed.

~John Cleese

For me, the great problem growing up in England was that I had a very narrow concept of what God can be, and it was damn close to an old man with a beard.

~John Cleese

My hovercraft is full of eels.

~John Cleese

I used to desire many, many things, but now I have just one desire, and that's to get rid of all my other desires.

~John Cleese

God was treated like this powerful, erratic, rather punitive father who has to be pacified and praised. You know, flattered.

~John Cleese

England is a fairly envious little country and it's embodied in the press. They don't like anyone being more distinguished than they are.

~John Cleese

When we hold a World Championship for a particular sport, we invite teams from other countries to play as well.

~John Cleese

I learned a lot of things about literature talking to people at the publishing company. Did you know that about 90 percent of celebrity autobiographies are ghostwritten?

~John Cleese

Too many people confuse being serious with being solemn.

~John Cleese

I think the problem with people like this is that they are so stupid that they have no idea how stupid they are.

~John Cleese

If life were fair, Dan Quayle would be making a living asking 'Do you want fries with that?'

~John Cleese

Always start where the energy is.

~John Cleese

I think that the real religion is about the understanding that if we can only still our egos for a few seconds, we might have a chance of experiencing something that is divine in nature.

~John Cleese

But then acting is all about faking. We're all very good at faking things that we have no competence with.

~John Cleese

I find it rather easy to portray a businessman. Being bland, rather cruel and incompetent comes naturally to me.

~John Cleese

I think that money spoils most things, once it becomes the primary motivating force.

~John Cleese

It's not the despair, Laura. I can take the despair. It's the hope I can't stand.

~John Cleese

It's a plastic surgeon you need, not a doctor

~John Cleese

When people say 'I'm not a prude, but ...' what they mean is 'I am a prude, and ...'.

~John Cleese

Give your mind as long as possible to come up with something original.

~John Cleese

Ask yourself, "When does this decision have to be taken?" and having answered it, defer the decision until then, in order to give yourself maximum pondering time.

~John Cleese

I think we're all born with a sense of humor. Creativity is another thing though.

~John Cleese

If you wish to kill yourself but lack the courage to, I think a visit to

Palmerston North will do the trick.

~John Cleese

The Americans are so much more positive. They are much more in love with success. In Britain, they're a fairly envious bunch, and they love it if you fail.

~John Cleese

I think it takes a long time, as you get older, to realize just how crazy the world is, just how ridiculous it all is.

~John Cleese

If you really don't know where to start or if you're stuck, start generating random connections and allow your intuition to tell you if one might lead somewhere interesting.

~John Cleese

Tension is wonderful for making people laugh.

~John Cleese

Sci-fi has never really been my bag. But I do believe in a lot of weird things these days, such as synchronicity. Quantum physics suggests it's possible, so why not?

~John Cleese

When you get to my age, and I'm 66 now, you realize that the world is a madhouse and that most people are operating in fantasy anyway. So once you realise that, it doesn't bother you much.

~John Cleese

Laughter destroys any divisions between people.

~John Cleese

You can't make Christ funny. He's self-aware, he's too flexible within

the situation. It's rigidity, it's when the ego takes over and the behavior becomes inappropriate that it becomes funny.

~John Cleese

The trouble with the British is that they are not interested in ideas. If Jesus came back today and offered to speak for an hour on British television, they would say, "What! Another talking head?"

~John Cleese

English television from the Fifties to the Nineties was the least bad in the world, and now it's just as bad as it is anywhere.

~John Cleese

By watching the great, old comedians I picked up a few tricks about how to do physical comedy. And whenever I could learn something, I sort of added that to my repertoire.

~John Cleese

The Americans are just more enthusiastic and more likely to engage in hyperbole.

~John Cleese

I think that I feel an indignation when I don't understand something.

~John Cleese

I find the Alexander Technique very helpful in my work. Things happen without you trying. They get to be light and relaxed. You must get an Alexander teacher to show it to you.

~John Cleese

Once we've made a decision, we are efficient only if we go through with it decisively, undistracted by doubts about its correctness.

~John Cleese

Why write about the past? Well, there's more of it.

~John Cleese

While you're being creative, nothing is wrong. There's no such thing as a mistake, and any drivel may lead to the breakthrough.

~John Cleese

My mum died about three years ago at the age of 101, and just towards the end, as she began to run out of energy, she did actually stop trying to tell me what to do most of the time.

~John Cleese

I have several times made a poor choice by avoiding a necessary confrontation.

~John Cleese

Your Mother was A Hamster and you Father Smelled of elder berries.

~John Cleese

Laughter is a force for democracy.

~John Cleese

High creativity is responding to situations without critical thought.

~John Cleese

When you've been doing comedy for forty years, you really do know most of the jokes. And even if you don't know a specific joke, you can pretty much guess what it's going to be.

~John Cleese

Naturally, people's image is of a performer, but the reality of it is the writing for me has always been the most important thing and the most rewarding thing.

~John Cleese

The sad thing about true stupidity is that you can do absolutely nothing about it.

~John Cleese

Who's ever going to write a film in which I get the girl? Me!

~John Cleese

Basil Fawlty was an easy character for me. For some reason, portraying a mean, uptight, incompetent bully comes naturally to me.

~John Cleese

The thrill I got discovering Buster Keaton when I was growing up was so exciting. He was one of the greats.

~John Cleese

I would say that I began with a very edgy, very driven personality and after a sufficient amount of therapy over many, many years, I managed to become rather relaxed and happy.

~John Cleese

I get bored easily. I've been bored most of my life.

~John Cleese

Telling people how to be creative is easy - being creative is difficult.

~John Cleese

My views are heretical to people who believe in political correctness.

~John Cleese

And now for something completely different...

~John Cleese

The main evolutionary significance of humor is that it gets us from the closed mode to the open mode quicker than anything else.

~John Cleese

There's something about watching an animal that puts you in contact with where we came from and what we're still a part of.

~John Cleese

The open mode is a mood in which curiosity for its own sake can operate, because we're not under pressure to get a specific thing done properly. We can play.

~John Cleese

Sense of humor is so much more subjective than anyone believes.

~John Cleese

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