

# Rollo May Quotes

*Creativity, Courage, Men, People, Anxiety, Life, Self, Artist, Moving, Running,  
Inspirational, Creative, Way, Reality, Order, Creating, Community, Mean, Love  
Is, Commitment*

The opposite of courage in our society is not cowardice, it is conformity.

~Rollo May

Courage is not the absence of despair; it is, rather, the capacity to move ahead in spite of despair.

~Rollo May

Freedom is man's capacity to take a hand in his own development. It is our capacity to mold ourselves.

~Rollo May

If you do not express your own original ideas, if you do not listen to your own being, you will have betrayed yourself.

~Rollo May

Fortunately, however, we no longer have to argue that self-love is not only necessary and good but that it also is a prerequisite for loving others.

~Rollo May

Communication leads to community, that is, to understanding, intimacy and mutual valuing.

~Rollo May

Many people suffer from the fear of finding oneself alone, and so they don't find themselves at all.

~Rollo May

Real freedom is the ability to pause between stimulus and response, and in that pause, choose.

~Rollo May

In order to be open to creativity, one must have the capacity for

constructive use of solitude. One must overcome the fear of being alone.

~Rollo May

The schizoid man is the natural product of the technological man. It is one way to live and is increasingly utilized and it may explode into violence.

~Rollo May

The relationship between commitment and doubt is by no means an antagonistic one. Commitment is healthiest when it is not without doubt but in spite of doubt.

~Rollo May

Depression is the inability to construct a future.

~Rollo May

Every human being must have a point at which he stands against the culture, where he says, this is me and the damned world can go to hell.

~Rollo May

Life comes from physical survival; but the good life comes from what we care about.

~Rollo May

Memory is not just the imprint of the past time upon us; it is the keeper of what is meaningful for our deepest hopes and fears.

~Rollo May

In my clinical experience, the greatest block to a person's development is his having to take on a way of life which is not rooted in his own powers.

~Rollo May

One does not become fully human painlessly.

~Rollo May

In religion, it is not the sycophants or those who cling most faithfully to the status quo who are ultimately praised. It is the insurgents.

~Rollo May

Love is generally confused with dependence; but in point of fact, you can love only in proportion to your capacity for independence.

~Rollo May

One of the few blessings of living in an age of anxiety is that we are forced to become aware of ourselves.

~Rollo May

There can be no stronger proof of the impoverishment of our contemporary culture than the popular - though profoundly mistaken - definition of myth as falsehood.

~Rollo May

Beauty is the experience that gives us a sense of joy and a sense of peace simultaneously.

~Rollo May

The purpose of psychotherapy is to set people free.

~Rollo May

Science, Nietzsche had warned, is becoming a factory, and the result will be ethical nihilism.

~Rollo May

Recall how often in human history the saint and the rebel have be the same person. (p. 35)

~Rollo May

People attain worth and dignity by the multitude of decisions they make from day to day.

~Rollo May

Creativity is not merely the innocent spontaneity of our youth and childhood; it must also be married to the passion of the adult human being, which is a passion to live beyond one's death.

~Rollo May

One of the easiest ways to be irresponsible about power is to forget you have it.

~Rollo May

Hate is not the opposite of love; apathy is.

~Rollo May

It is an ironic habit of human beings to run faster when we have lost our way.

~Rollo May

The amazing thing about love is that it is the best way to get to know ourselves.

~Rollo May

The receptivity of the artist must never be confused with passivity. Receptivity is the artist's holding him or herself alive and open to hear what being may speak.

~Rollo May

I learned that healing and cure are active processes in which I myself needed to participate.

~Rollo May

What if imagination and art are not frosting at all, but the fountainhead

of human experience?

~Rollo May

Intimacy requires courage because risk is inescapable.

~Rollo May

Vanity and narcissism â€” the compulsive need to be admired and praised â€” undermine one's courage, for one then fights on someone else's conviction rather than one's own.

~Rollo May

A dynamic struggle goes on within a person between what he or she consciously thinks on the one hand and, on the other, some insight, some perspective that is struggling to be born.

~Rollo May

People only change when it becomes too dangerous to stay the way they are.

~Rollo May

It is dangerous to know, but it is more dangerous not to know.

~Rollo May

Receptivity requires a nimbleness, a fine-honed sensitivity in order to let one's self be the vehicle of whatever vision may emerge.

~Rollo May

Intimacy requires courage because risk is inescapable. We cannot know at the outset how the relationship will affect us.

~Rollo May

There is an energy field between humans. And, when we reach out in passion, it is met with an answering passion and changes the relationship forever.

~Rollo May

Poets often have a conscious awareness that they are struggling with the daimonic, and that the issue is their working something through from the depths which push the self to a new plane.

~Rollo May

Evil, in this system of ethics, is that which tears apart, shuts out the other person, raises barriers, sets people against each other.

~Rollo May

Violence arises not out of superfluity of power but out of powerlessness.

~Rollo May

Apathy adds up, in the long run, to cowardice.

~Rollo May

The first thing necessary for a constructive dealing with time is to learn to live in the reality of the present moment. For psychologically speaking, this present moment is all we have.

~Rollo May

When we are dealing with human beings, no truth has reality by itself; it is always dependent upon the reality of the immediate relationship.

~Rollo May

Creativity is neither the product of neurosis nor simple talent, but an intense courageous encounter with the Gods.

~Rollo May

A myth is a way of making sense in a senseless world. Myths are narrative patterns that give significance to our existence.

~Rollo May

The creative act arises out of the struggle of human beings with and against that which limits them.

~Rollo May

Humans have a habit of running faster when they have lost their way.

~Rollo May

One longs for the presence of a leader like Lincoln, who openly admitted his doubts and as openly preserved his commitment.

~Rollo May

If we admit our depression openly and freely, those around us get from it an experience of freedom rather than the depression itself.

~Rollo May

Human freedom involves our capacity to pause, to choose the one response toward which we wish to throw our weight.

~Rollo May

Tools and techniques ought to be an extension of consciousness, but they can just as easily be a protection from consciousness. Then the tools become defence mechanisms... against the unconscious.

~Rollo May

One central need in life is to fulfill its own potential.

~Rollo May

There is nobody who totally lacks the courage to change.

~Rollo May

It is amazing how many hints and guides and intuitions for living come to the sensitive person who has ears to hear what his body is saying.

~Rollo May



All people are struggling to be creative in some way, and the artist is the one who has succeeded in this task of life.

~Rollo May

It is well to remind ourselves that anxiety signifies a conflict, and so long as a conflict is going on, a constructive solution is possible.

~Rollo May

However it may be confounded or covered up or counterfeited, this elemental capacity to fight against injustice remains the distinguishing characteristic of human beings.

~Rollo May

There is a curiously sharp sense of joy - or perhaps better expressed, a sense of mild ecstasy - that comes when you find the particular form required by your creation.

~Rollo May

Something is born, comes into being, something that did not exist before - which is as good a definition of creativity as we can get.

~Rollo May

The insight is born with anxiety, guilt and the joy and gratification that is inseparable from the actualizing of a new idea or vision.

~Rollo May

Creativity occurs in an act of encounter and is to be understood with this encounter as its center.

~Rollo May

It is interesting to note how many of the great scientific discoveries begin as myths.

~Rollo May

Purpose in the human being is a much more complex phenomenon than what used to be called will power.

~Rollo May

We must always base our commitment in the center of our own being, or else no commitment will be ultimately authentic.

~Rollo May

Terrorism and the whole drug scene are vivid examples of the fact that what persons abhor most of all in life is the possibility that they will not matter.

~Rollo May

Care is a state in which something does matter; care is the opposite of apathy. Care is the necessary source of eros, the source of human tenderness.

~Rollo May

Freedom does not come automatically; it is achieved. And it is not gained in a single bound; it must be achieved each day.

~Rollo May

Creativity is the encounter of the intensively conscious human being with his world.

~Rollo May

Every act of genuine creativity means achieving a higher level of self-awareness and personal freedom.

~Rollo May

Competitive individualism militates against the experience of community, and that lack of community is a centrally important factor in contemporaneous anxiety.

~Rollo May

Courage is necessary to make being and becoming possible.

~Rollo May

Ecstasy is the accurate term for the intensity of consciousness that occurs in the creative act.

~Rollo May

The ultimate error is the refusal to look evil in the face.

~Rollo May

By the creative act, we are able to reach beyond our own death.

~Rollo May

Every authentic artist is engaged in this creating of the conscience of the race, even though he or she may be unaware of the fact.

~Rollo May

No one can separate themselves from one's social group and remain healthy, because the very structure of personality is dependent on the community.

~Rollo May

By whatever name one calls it, genuine creativity is characterized by an intensity of awareness, a heightened consciousness.

~Rollo May

The danger always exists that our technology will serve as a buffer between us and nature, a block between us and the deeper dimensions of our own experience.

~Rollo May

All our feelings, like the artist's paints and brush, are ways of communicating and sharing something meaningful from us to the world.

~Rollo May

This personal freedom to think and feel and speak authentically and to be conscious of so doing is the quality that distinguishes us as human.

~Rollo May

Humor is the healthy way of feeling "distance" between one's self and the problem, a way of standing off and looking at one's problem with perspective.

~Rollo May

A person can meet anxiety to the extent that his values are stronger than the threat.

~Rollo May

The hallmark of courage in our age of conformity is the capacity to stand on one's own convictions - not obstinately or defiantly

~Rollo May

When people feel their insignificance as individual persons, they also suffer an undermining of their sense of human responsibility.

~Rollo May

Understanding and love require a wisdom that comes only with age.

~Rollo May

We receive love "from our children as well as others" not in proportion to our demands or sacrifices or needs, but roughly in proportion to our own capacity to love.

~Rollo May

Creativity is the process of bringing something new into being.

~Rollo May

The creative process must be explored... as the expression of the normal people in the act of actualizing themselves.

~Rollo May

The poet, like the lover, is a menace on the assembly line.

~Rollo May

We express our being by creating. Creativity is a necessary sequel to being.

~Rollo May

I became a psychotherapist because that's where people will unburden themselves, where they will show what is in their hearts.

~Rollo May

Insight comes at a moment of transition between work and relaxation.

~Rollo May

Whereas moral courage is the righting of wrongs, creative courage, in contrast, is the discovering of new forms, new symbols, new patterns on which a new society can be built.

~Rollo May

Inner sense of worth that comes with being in love does not seem to depend essentially on whether the love is returned or not.

~Rollo May

Physical courage in whatever scene ... seems to hinge on whether the individual can feel he is fighting for others as well as himself.

~Rollo May

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