

CANCER

MAY

KILL ME

BUT I WILL DIE

HEALED

Your God Is *Still* Too Small

by

Richard F. Hicks

Cancer May Kill Me But I Will Die Healed, Your God is *Still* Too Small copyright 2024 by the writer Richard F. Hicks. All rights reserved. Richard F. Hicks, P.O. Box 1104, Bethany, Oklahoma 73008 USA

WARNING

Rated R – not suitable for children or cowards!

For Dan

Who? Who is Dan? Keep reading.

Atisha's Thumbnail

Atisha was an Asian wisdom teacher. Here is my thumbnail notes on the nine facts/steps to dying. The reader should read them aloud at a slow pace three times.

All die. I die.

Less time. Less time.

Death says "Let's go!"

My time not fixed.

Many ways to die.

Body fragile.

Stuff can't help.

Family can't help.

Body can't help.

How to read this book.

Don't look for a plot there isn't one.

Don't look for a sequence. If there are any, I didn't put it there.

Each passage/page stands by itself to bless and cause a ruckus.

Read each page aloud at a slow pace three times. This will cause you to consider each bit of wisdom.

1. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

The cancers that doctors don't
want to call cancers . . . because
the word is 'too scary'

- Dailymail.co.uk 29 January, 2024

In the Harry Potter books, the author J.K.Rowling shows me the dangers of not calling cancer what it is – CANCER.

In the Harry Potter books, the evil one is called “He whose name must not be spoken.” Or, “You Know Who.”

Our hero Harry begins becoming the hero when he in a teenage angry fit uses the name “Voldemort!”

I cannot be a cowardly as my doctors. I must say, I must shout
cancer, cancer, Cancer, CANCER!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

2. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Haven't Got Time for the Pain

“ . . . ‘cause I haven't got time for the pain
I haven't got room for the pain
I haven't the need for the pain
Not since I've known you . . . ”

- Lyrics by Jacob Brackman and Carly E. Simon

Maybe I should turn this into a love song to my pain. I must not deny my pain. That would make my pain grow bigger. Pains are like little yappy dogs I try to ignore – they just get louder.

Pain, I honor you but I don't have time.

Pain, I know you have a job but you will have to live elsewhere I don't have a vacancy for you.

Pain, I have other tools; I don't have a use for you.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

3. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Helping, Fixing, Serving

Helping, fixing, serving – I can only do one at a time. I must chose which one at every moment.

When I help, I see others and myself as weak.

When I try to fix, I see myself and others as broken.

In serving, I see life as whole not in parts needing glue.

(After Naomi Remen MD.)

Am I “living with cancer” or “fighting cancer?” I’m the one with cancer. I get a lot of pity at worse or empathy at best. Even if I’m helping, fixing, or serving me I can use the fancy word – altruism. Look at me I’m altruistic! I’m a hero!

I can and do slip into this trap called pathological altruism even when I’m trying to help or fix me.

Me, myself, and I – the Trinity I see in my mirror.

Instead of an official care giver – medical staff, volunteer, etc. - becoming a self-made pathologically altruistic “hero.” I, too, can present myself as a pathologically altruistic “hero patient.”

I’m I fixing, helping, or serving?

I'm I being a pathological altruistic fixer, or helper, or even servant?

I'm I living as a pathological altruistic hero patient?

Pathological altruism is the fastest way to burnout. Am I on that road? Imagine a patient with burnout!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

4. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

The Allness of Life, the Nowness of Life

The guy said, “The little angel statue on my desk is broken. A little glue put it right but there’s still wound/crack where the break occurred. My little angel is like me. Broken, repaired, but still cracked.”

I agree with “I’m a mistake. I see inside the mistake every morning. I face the mistake and praise it.”

Cracks are how healing gets in. Cracks are how healing gets out to others.

Get cracked. Stay cracked.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

5. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

It Takes Two To Tango

Tango is the most intimate of social dances. I take my partner in my arms. My dance partner takes me into its arms. We pull one another so close the Tango might also be called a “belly rubbing” dance. It looks like two people having face-to-face sex while standing up and fully clothed.

It takes two to tango – my cancer and me. Like in the tango my cancer and me move as one body. We mirror each others moves.

Doing the tango with cancer is like the dance marathons of 1930s America. Couples dance and dance and dance with only a short hourly break. Couples keep dancing long after they should have stopped because they want the prize.

After hours, perhaps days, only one couple is left standing and dancing. That couple wins.

Do I want to keep dancing with my cancer long enough to win the marathon?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

6. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

I'm Dying Because Doctors Missed My
Cancer: . . . Hospital Bosses Who "Con-
demned to death" by repeatedly refusing
to Meet Her

- Rosie Taylor for MailOnline, April 23, 2024

How much money I'm I worth? How many resources will or
should be spent healing me; keeping me alive?

How hard should me and my wife fight to get me healed?

How much hell should we raise?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

7. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Brandon*

Sitting in my recliner at the infusion clinic other patients and I nod at one another – maybe.

Since a chemo infusion can take up to two hours sometimes a lot of people close their eyes and “sleep.” Unless snoring is heard I doubt that much sleeping gets done. Pretending to be asleep is a polite way to avoid having to talk.

Today I got a good needle tech. Some techs just have a great, blessed gift of being able to find a vein and placing the needle in almost without pain. Today I got the Master of Needles!

Today I sit next to “Brandon” who wants to talk. All patients here know the rules – it is like Twelve Step groups: If someone needs to talk – you listen.

Listening is easy. Stay awake. Look ‘em in the eye. Shut up. Smile.

One day I will want to talk.

Brandon probably won’t be there. An infusion clinic is like an airport or bus station waiting area.

Waiting areas are like a box of chocolates. Some of us are filled with sweet caramel, some with that yucky hard gelatin stuff,

some with nuts, etc. And some of us are solid hard chocolate all the way through.

If the chemo doesn't work, we just melt away.

(*This Brandon isn't the NASCAR "Brandon.")

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

8. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

How Much Do I Weigh?

Sometimes I can brag about how much I weigh. In the 1980s, as a thirty-something non-obese young man I visited the nude beaches of Ibiza – Spain’s party island of that time.

On the nude beaches, I quickly learned to stand next to the elderly Germans. Wow! I look wonderful!

But wait. Even the My 600 Pound Life folks can’t compare:

The Earth’s weight/mass is about 6,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 kilograms!

And we big guts, butts, and our planet are rotating in the Milky Way. The Milky Way takes 230 million years to make one full rotation traveling at a bzillion gazillion MPH. WOW!!!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

9. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?!

My God is *still* too small.

Did my God create randomness?

Did my God create luck? Accidents? Arbitrariness? Is my God one who plans or is unplanned?

Am I a puppet with God pulling my strings?

I have to be careful. If I say that my God is in total control, I'm saying that God gave me cancer; or allowed cancer to get at me.

How big is my God? Is my God still too small?

STOP. Read the passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP. In silence after the third reading.

10. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Walk thru the grave yard
To cheer myself up – O ho
Horation

- A haiku by Richard Hicks

Shake, thump!
No ninos, no ninos

Arrrgh! - September 22, 2017 Mexico City earthquake.

- A haiku by Richard Hicks

White, yellow, dark green
Fall, winter Pecos Wilderness
Bare twig darkness green

- A haiku by Richard Hicks

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

11. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

GREEN PILL

In the *Matrix* films, the hero is offered a blue pill and a red pill. The red pill will make him a continuing slave hooked into/on The Matrix. The red pill offers him a chance to fight.

Sadly this prison of two ideas entered our political life because red and blue show well on television screens.

In reading this book, we will take the green pill. The green pill frees me to have more than either/or options. There is an infinity of options from which I can choose.

Choose freedom!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

12. Read this passage aloud slowly three times.

Talk About Dry Skin

I live in Oklahoma. I have excema – a dry skin disease. This headline shocked me.

This 300-million-year-old fossilized skin found in Oklahoma is the oldest in the world.

– Jana Hayes, The Oklahoman, January 25, 2024

WOW! 300 million?! I thought I was a fossil. Not quite it seems.

As with cancer there seems to be no rhyme or reason for anything. Find two cancer docs get three answers to any question.

Those having a cancer aren't looking for opinions; we're looking for definite answers.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

13. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

NOW!

NOW! Is all I have. Living in the Present Tense.

I'm a tiny, fragile, pissant human seeing my life and the world as linear. Linear is 1 . . . 2 . . . 3. . . . Linear is A . . . B . . . C

Linear is one thing after another. As one wiseguy once said, "History/life is just one damn thing after another!"

But my life is much more a Chaos than a Linear one. That is because I try to control it and/or try to do it all at once.

Even much more sick and evil is when I try to

Do it all, all at once; and, try to

Have it all, all at once.

When in reality no one can do/have it all at once. Few can do/have it all even once.

It is like being in amusement park and trying to ride all the rides **AT THE SAME TIME!** If I try to eat it all before riding it all, all at the same time – it's gonna be vomit time!

Here's a way I can grow into living in peace: Only live in the **NOW**. The **NOW** is the only thing I have.

The **NOW** is instantly my Past.

The Future becomes the NOW instantly.

Therefore, the NOW, or the present tense is the only moment I have. But each moment of NOW demands something else not in an order I'd prefer. Life doesn't line up waiting for me.

STOP. Read the passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP. Sit in silence after the third reading.

14. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Walking from Sunda to Sahul

Once upon a time (really) when the sea level was lower I could walk from Sunda (Indonesia) to Sahul (Australia.)

Long Lost Continent is FOUND Off
the Coast of Australia: Landmass Nearly
Twice the Size of the UK was Home to
half a million Humans 70,000 years ago
- Jonathan Chadwick, MailOnline, January 17, 2024

WOW! This kind of report puts me in my tiny place!

It is like having to face decline and maybe death from cancer.

I'm gonna go out and gaze at clouds.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

15. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

WHY DO BABIES CRY?

Why do babies cry?

At birth, I cried because labor and delivery hurt!

I came out of a dark, wonder world of warm water, then

Pain! Swoosh! Into a bright, waterless, scratchy world where I immediately confronted gravity. So naturally I screamed, “No! I wanna go back!”

I screamed again and giants began to lay soft hands on me with warm watery cream. Better.

I scream a second time. Why? It worked the first time. Later I learned this is called teaching others, the giants, how to make me happy.

During my death I hope to find such wonderful care.

STOP: Read the passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

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16. Read this passage aloud slowly three times.

Hicks' ING Cycle. Here are the big issues I must juggle nano-second by nano-second:

Thanking
Earning
Breathing
Saving
Serving
Giving
Forgiving

Imagine it this way: All of these things come at me in no order, no timing. And they do it in multi-dementional ways. Usually at the most inconvenient times.

It's like this all the while I have cancer or I don't have cancer:

Here comes Serving, Earning, Giving, Breathing, Forgiving, Thanking, Saving. . . . Saving, Earning, Forgiving, Thanking, Serving, Forgiving, Earning, Earning, Giving, Giving, Forgiving, . . .

It is a neverending stream of have-to-dos.

And, here I am with cancer.

Do I have cancer? Sure everyone has cancer each moment of our lives. At any time one of my body's gazillion cells can get loose and begins growing and growing and growing.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

17. Read this passage aloud slowly three times.

Let's take the easy ones first:

BREATHING

Breathing is the only thing I have to do. Everything else is a choice. I choose to eat – too much! No one is forcing me to eat – anything. I have never eaten anything accidentally.

Breathing slowly in silence is powerful. When I'm standing in line at the grocery checkout, or, the airport check in, security, boarding, or luggage pickup I have the power to choose to create silence – and breathe.

SERVING

Serving is easy. All I have to do is serve (love) myself while doing things that help me and others. When I was a manager of a Wendy's restaurant I served myself by earning money. I served the team in leading them in succeeding at their first jobs. I served our customers by providing them delicious food.

Even those customers who ordered “A triple meat with cheese; fries; a Frosty chocolate cream dessert; and a large DIET Pepsi.”

Gluttony is always popular!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

18. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

EARNING and SAVING

Earning and Saving are also choices. Ones that can bring me great pleasure now and in the future.

GIVING

Giving brings the greatest pleasure of all. I am a debt free multimillionaire floating on a cosmic ocean of grace.

Giving is the most fun I can have not involving fat, sugar, and chocolate!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

19. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

THANKING

Thanking is an act of my will. Sometimes thanking is the last thing I want to do. Sometimes it never occurs to me because I'm suffering from cranial anal inversion. CAI is my ever popular head up butt.

When I have my head up my butt: I cannot see – it is dark up there. All I can hear is my own guts gurgling. I cannot walk very well. I cannot sit down. I can only smell my own waste!

I can cure my CAI with a mindful, miracle POP! When I pulled my head out.

Then I can know of all the many things for which I need to be thanking.

Begin living in thanking like this: I am thanking the chair cushion. It keeps my butt off of the hard chair. I am thanking the chair for keeping my butt off of the hard floor. I am thanking the floor for keeping my butt off of the cold, wet, muddy dirt and rocks.

I have to train myself at least weekly to spend time extremely aware of each and every part of what supplies me with life, comfort, and pleasure.

This is what Asian teachers mean when they say to gaze at a flower and (thanking) thinking of all people, places, things, and ideas that is giving me the beautiful flower.

When I am receiving any serving, especially medical services, I become the thanking patient. That crazy patient who smiles and repeatedly and repeatedly says “Thank you” to any and all. Especially to the nursing and cleaning staff.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

20. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

And now for the hardest – forgiving.

FORGIVING

Forgiving is the hardest thing I do.

Damn! I keep thanking, earning, breathing, saving, serving, giving – all in the same moments of my straight line of my little life:

And now I remember I have to live Forgiving in my eternal present. My eternal now.

Like I just said, damn!

Not only forgiving but there are three forgivings I ave to do all at once.

Forgiving God. Forgiving Others. Forgiving self (me.)

Me?! What did I do? I must first admit that I have some part, some blame to bear, in everything that happens. My part may be only 0.000000001% of the fault but it is still my part.

Others? Oh, those bastards! Most of the time I can live forgiving others. The hard part is not inflating myself. I'll will hear myself saying, "There, there you poor bastard. I'm forgiving you because I'm so good." Then I have to confess that lie and live forgiving Me, again, and again, and again.

Forgiving God. Forgiving God?!

God created a material world. God created gravity. God was setting me up for bricks to fall on my toes!

God created a world where babies die, etc! I gotta deal with forgiving God and helping to solve those life stealing ideas

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

21. Read this passage slowly, three times.

BIG WISDOM FOLLOWS:

Sometimes I need to cuss God out. Yell and scream at God. I scream into a pillow so I don't scare the dogs. I cuss into the sky in a vacant place.

Sometimes cussing God out becomes a fight. Like the Bible guy Jacob had.

In the Hebrew Bible's first book called *Beginnings* (Genesis), I read that one night Jacob was out by himself. He was visited by a something.

Jacob and Something fought and wrestled all night. Toward dawn Something ordered Jacob to let go. Jacob said he would let go only after a blessing from Something.

Something blessed Jacob and touched Jacob in his thigh socket. Something disappeared.

Jacob walked away limping from the wound. I've never found that Jacob ever stopped limping.

I've cussed God; or, fought God – I've live to tell the tale I'm now telling. But I've got God-given wounds with which I'll die. Just like Jacob.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

22. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

FEAR

Dog lover, 21, hid the fact he was coughing up blood from his parents and thought he only had a bad back but later cancer killed him.

He found out he had cancer on January 26 and passed away (soon thereafter.)

- UKDailyMail February 3, 2024

Fear is one of my biggest motivators. A loud noise is another. A pain can immediately turn on my fear.

“Fear is the mind killer.”

- *Dune* by Frank Herbert

“Fear is the mind killer” is an oft repeated line in all of the *Dune* books. I agree. I must treat fear as an old friend who has only one skill – creating more fear.

To butcher the lyrics from Simon and Garfunkel

Hello fear my old friend
I’ve come to talk with you again
You crept up while I wasn’t looking
And now you’re here again
Sit. Let’s talk.

STOP. Read the passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP. Sit in silence after the third reading.

23. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Three Legged Chickens

Once upon a time, a traveling salesman was driving along a two lane highway. Suddenly a chicken passed him. The chicken had three legs. He followed the chicken. It turned into a chicken ranch. (No not that chicken ranch!)

He pulled in, got out of his car, and was approached by a farmer. Introductions were exchanged “Howdy,” “Howdy” was the reply.

There thousands of three legged chickens were peacefully pecking away in the large field.

The salesman said “One of your three legged chickens passed me on the highway!” “Yep,” was the reply.

“How do three legged chickens taste?”

“Don’t know. Never caught one.”

Cancer is like a three legged chicken. It is hard to catch and study, much less kill.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

24. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

In the 1970s, Norman Cousins, the then longtime editor of *The Saturday Evening Post*, was struck with a deadly disease. The doctors said they could not help except with drugs.

Cousins was determined to at least feel better. But instead of getting pumped full of opiates he chose to laugh.

In those pre-digital video days, he had a sound film projector brought into this Manhattan apartment. He brought in all of the Marx Brothers films along with other comic classics.

He played the kings of comedy like The Marx Brothers, Laurel and Hardy, The Three Stooges, etc. and laughed himself healed.

I find fart jokes endless funny. The video show *The World's Dumbest* provides hours of healing laughter.

Give me coffee to change the things I can.

And wine to accept those that I can't.

- Roadside sign wisdom.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

25. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

We Know Less Than 1% of Squat

What REALLY Lies Beneath: (What) Lurks
in the Deep Sea – As Experts Admit We Still
Don't Know What's Hiding in 95% of the Ocean

- Willian Hunter, UKDailyMail, January 10, 2024

Not just in our oceans! In Turkey, there are at least two large sites of super ancient rubble from long ago. The tourist ancient ruins like Egypt's Pyramids can kiss off.

The Gobekli, Turkey ruins are at least 11,500 years old.

The Karahantepe, Turkey ruins are at least 12,000 years old.

Both of these and others pre-date all that our “expert” scholarship has to offer. Just because we can see something in a museum, doesn't make it the oldest.

How big is my God?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more time.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

26. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

GRACE AND GRIT

Wisdom teacher Ken Wilber wrote a wonderful book whose title says it all:

Grace and Grit (A Love Story): A Spiritual Journey Through Life, Loss, and Beyond.

It is the story of he and his wife Treya Killiam share their journey through their marriage, and her all too soon, diagnosis, treatment, and death.

Read it if you want, but the name says it all.

Give me grit to change the things I can.

And grace to accept those I can't.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

27. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

US Olympic Legend Scott Hamilton
Explains Why He is Choosing NOT to
Treat Third Brain Cancer: “I’m at
Peace with Not Even Looking at It Again.”
- Daniel Matthews, February 22, 2024, DailyMail.com

Scott Hamilton has a huge kettle of trouble at a full roaring
boil under a heavy lid.

He says he’s tired of looking under the lid. Just let it be.

I wonder what would have to happen to me for me to

Just Let It Be?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

28. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

PRAYER

Get thunk-up on these truths:

Prayer changes things – me!

Some possible answers to prayer:

Yes.

No.

Yes. No. Grow. (Charles Stanley)

Yes.

Maybe.

Not yet.

Doesn't matter. Do whatever you want.

No.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

29. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Coalition of Cancer Experts Pen “Letter
to the World” Demanding Urgent
Investment Amid Grim Warning that
Cases Will Soar by 50% by 2040

- Emily Stearn, MailOnLine, February 21, 2024

When I see the word “investment” I hear “higher taxes.”

The most powerful element in my own health is - - wait for it - -
me!

No amount of research money can defeat me consuming poison.

No amount of research money can defeat the genes I got when
my parents, grandparents, etc. humped me into life.

Yes, I’m angry there is no magic pill.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

30. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

GET THUNK-UP ON THESE:

Why do bad things happen to good people? (Kushner)
*We all respond: Yes! I'm good. I should get
only the good and pleasurable!*

Why do good things happen to good people?
*We all respond: Well, to be truthful, there are
people who even though they're good
still don't deserve any good.*

*But, me?! I deserve all the good there is
in life*

Why do bad things happen to bad people?
*We respond: Those bastards deserve what
they get!*

Why do good things happen to bad people?
*We respond: Wait a minute! Bad people
shouldn't get squat except punishment!*

Jesus said forgive them.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

31. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Star Dune: Scientists Solve Mystery Behind Earth's Largest Desert Sands

- Georgina Renard, BBC, March 5, 2014

These dunes are found in Africa, Asia, North America, and Mars.

“ . . . a dune called Lala Lallia in Morocco is 13,000 years old.”

Makes me think of Kerry Livgren's lyric “ . . . dust in the wind.
All we are is dust in the wind.”

My wife and I have already bought our granite grave marker. It is engraved and placed in the Walker family plot of Ebenezer Cemetery in Huntsville, Texas.

Along with me one day this granite stone will be dust in the wind.

STOP: Reread the passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

32. Read this message aloud, slowly three times.

SPECIAL

When I choose to think that I'm special, something will happen to violently remind me that I'm not. It's like the Something which wrestled with Jacob.

Years ago comic Bill Maher said, “I’m tired of hearing about ‘the inner child.’ Too many people let their inner child control their life. I wanna see a lot more Outer Adult.” Maher would today feel the same about our need to be “special.”

I’m a retired school teacher with special education credentials and four other certifications.

To parents who report that their children are gifted, I’d remind them that “gifted” is a part of the special education curriculum.

Jesus knew about special. He was approached with this line, “Good teacher you are special. Here’s my question . . . ” Jesus brusquely responded. “Good/special – who are you calling good/special?! No one is good/special no not one!”

No not one. Not even Jesus. Jesus experienced all that human life and death has to offer. Now, get thunk up.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

33. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Talking with My Cancer

In the Netflix series, “3 Body Problem,” the a twenty-something young man reveals he has stage four pancreatic cancer.

In speaking (arguing) with his good friend from college he says, “I talk to cancer.”

Maybe I should talk to cancer. It will be just another voice inside me with whom I talk.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

34. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Hospice Nurse Reveals the Heartbreaking
Regret Most People Have Before They Die

- Mary Jacob, New York Post, January 20, 2025

What will my regret(s) be when I’m at my point of death?

What might I hear if I was a fly on the hospice room wall?

I should have eaten more kale!

I should have not bought that heated, vibrating recliner easy chair which I never got up out of.

I really wanted to tell “Charlie” to his face that he is an arrogant dumbass but now I’ve missed my chance.

What will my regret(s) be when I’m at my point of death?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

35. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Equality In Creation

God loves each part of creation. Creator God doesn’t have any “favorite children” as it were. The soaring eagle and the puking drunk on the street are both prized and loved.

God created and loves me.

God created and loves height.

God created and loves weight.

God created and loves speed.

God created and loves density. Like the hardness of concrete.

I go to the top of a tall place – I jump off the roof and my two hundred pounds begins to pick up speed.

God loves me. Plus God loves height. Plus God loves weight.
Plus God loves speed. Plus God loves hardness. Means . . .

I go splat on the concrete. But God loves me. Even when I
choose the prove that gravity wins every time.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

36. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

My Dying Wish Is . . .

“I want to die peacefully in my own home surrounded by my
loved ones. Annie” Hand written note found tied to a Dying Wish
Tree.

What is my dying wish?

No, deeply. What is my dying wish?

I can't bullshit this answer.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

37. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

*“Make room in your life
for things that make
your heart sing.”*

- Dan Miller

CANCER IS LIKE SPARROWS

The popular hymn “His Eye is On the Sparrow” reaches and touches a lot of people. Especially the line “. . . his eye is on the sparrow and I know he watches me.”

God has got to keep an eye on the sparrows!

Sparrows are mobsters and gangsters! In the back garden, I have several bird feeders and a bath. Our neighbor has an overgrown evergreen bush providing a home for mobs and gangs of sparrows.

A mob of sparrows will spring to action and swarm a feeder full of seed. A gang of sparrows will attack other animals trying to get at the seeds!

God keeps an eye on the sparrows and a hand on the wallet.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

38. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

The Clan of One-Breasted Women

. . . is a true family story by Terry Tempest Williams.

In her family, breast cancer visits each generation. To her knowing three generations of women have lost a breast to the knife.

So far, that's nine breast removals. There may have been more in the past. It is unknown what the future holds.

For me, a male, I want to remember the one-balled men who lost a testicle to cancer.

All is grace.

All is gift.

Some gifts stink. It is my job to find the grace in each gift.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

39. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Travel Guru Rick Steves Opens Up
About Life's "Regrets" After Cancer
Diagnosis: "I'm Sad About It"

- People magazine, Toria Sheffield, December 14, 2024

For over twenty years the Rick Steves travel shows have been a fixture of my late Sunday afternoon local public TV viewing.

I could understand that during The Lockdown he couldn't travel and produce new episodes. By now I can quote each episode myself due to four years of repeats.

Then I see the headline above.

Do I have regrets? Am I sad about my regrets?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

40. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

SHIT'TIM

After leaving Egypt during their forty-year wandering the Children of Israel found themselves in Shit'tim. They didn't stay in Shit'tim!

We I find myself in Shit'tim I gotta keep walking. I don't even pause to catch my breath.

I've been known to find that I've been carrying around Shit'tim with me!

I must live out the wisdom of not making Shit'tim my home.

I must scrap my boots off and keep walking.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

41. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times

Make A Ruckus

Seth Godin ends each podcast with “Now, go make a ruckus.”

When cancer(s) make a ruckus in my life I have to remember Godin’s directions and go make a ruckus.

St. Jude’s Hospital for Children with Cancer has been making a ruckus for decades. I remember watching St. Jude’s founder, entertainer Danny Thomas, with my parents on a black and white television in the 1960s.

When St. Jude’s was founded 80% of children with cancer died.

Today 80% continue living.

The leaders at St. Jude’s have made the wise decision to make a ruckus in some of their television commercials.

SJ has several commercials featuring a child with cancer. The child’s parents tell us of their multi-year fight to save the child’s life. But sometimes a cancer will reappear with death quickly following.

Ruckus!

Cancer my kill me but I will die healed!

My God is *still* too small.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

42. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Our Pets Know They Are About To Die
and Wish Us an Emotional Farewell -
I'm Convinced These Stories Prove It,
by Eminent Biologist Rupert Sheldrake.
- Rupert Sheldrake, UKDailyMail, December 26, 2024

I was already out of the house that day. My wife was in the shower. When she got out there was our dead dead Cocker Spaniel, Hastings, by the bath toilet. He needed our help or wanted to be near one of us.

Because we are rich, we kept two other dogs alive paying the pet hospital lots of money for their ICU. Because of wealth, we, with well meaning love kept Booger and Chip from peace.

A year apart, we held each sick dog in our laps while the doctor administered the magic juice. I felt each dog's thank you.

When I'm ready to go I hope I'm able to communicate.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

43. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Time and Gravity

Last year a kind group back in my hometown organized a fifty year high school reunion. I could not attend. I was already booked.

A group photo was taken and a link was sent. My immediate gut response was . . .

WHO ARE ALL THESE FAT, OLD PEOPLE?!

Maybe I should have attended. I would have looked young and skinny standing in that crowd!

I assisted my father after his heart by-pass operation. I helped him out of his poopy drawers and into clean ones. In doing so, I got a eye full of what I'll look like in forty years.

My father's naked wet ghost lives in the mirror of the bath room where I shower. Each time I step out of the shower I look into the mirror – and there is my father!

Time and gravity are unkind to everyone. The big word for this is entropy which means all of creation naturally decays into chaos.

Today I can get chest implants to make himself look like a body builder. But time and gravity will make those bags of silicone sag.

Time and gravity are two of the biggest cancers.

Time was created by and is loved and supported by Creator.

Gravity was created by and is loved and supported by Creator.

I was created by and am I'm loved and supported by Creator.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

44. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

The Best of a Bad Situation

I enjoy Ray Stevens' music. After a false start in Nashville, he recorded for cash pay many of his funny or novelty songs and left town. These songs are some of his most famous and profitable. Here's some wisdom from "Best of a Bad Situation."

"Doc, my husband thinks he is a chicken. Bring your husband in I can cure that. Can't! We need the eggs."

. . . She's just making the best of a bad situation.
Just trying to get by can't ya see.
We're all trying to make the best of a bad situation.
Just trying to get by can't ya see." - Ray Stevens

It is like living/fighting cancer – just making the best of a bad situation.

And, that's what I find so frustrating about life and cancer: The best I can do is make the best of a bad situation.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

45. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

WOW! Hang on!

Sitting in silence, I can realize that I'm moving in several directions.

I'm traveling on my continent that is heaving up and down.

I'm traveling on my continent as it moves on the surface of our planet.

I'm traveling at 24,000 mph as our globe spins.

I'm traveling with the globe's "wiggle" or tilt which gives us our seasons.

Our solar system is going around the center of our galaxy.

Our galaxy is traveling – moving – somewhere.

Maybe if I grunt real hard I can stop all this moving!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

46. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Groundbreaking research suggests organ transplant patients are inheriting donors' MEMORIES and personalities.

- Emily Joshu Sterne, Dailymail.com, December 12, 2024

Not news to me. I first heard of this almost thirty years ago. First with heart transplant recipients then with kidney recipients.

Some of the people receiving such wonderful gifts report that they're changed. They're changed not just by feeling better with working organs. Even though the names and life histories of transplant donors are kept secret, several different somethings change the recipient of an organ.

A receiving patient may report having memories from a life they haven't lived. For example, a broccoli farmer donates an organ and the one receiving the organ suddenly has cravings for extremely fresh broccoli.

At OKC Integris transplant center, they have performed a record four kidney transplants in one day from UNRELATED donors. Generic matches not needed if enough good will/love is placed in the donated organ and it is received gratefully.

WOW! My world gets bigger and bigger.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

47. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

“I Ignored These Cancer Symptoms for years
Because I was Scared – Now I Could Die
Within a Month at 31 Years Old”

- Dailymail.co.uk 31 January, 2024)

I remember my words several passages above:

Forgiving

The three forgivings we must willfully live into with each
breath:

Forgiving Others

Forgiving God

Forgiving me

No matter what number of cancers I have, I’m the only one who
can take action to change me.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

48. Read the following passage slowly, aloud three times.

Perfection

Perfection is a fantasy. Perfection – thar just ain't nary, nada, zip, zero.

Perfection is what I, me, myself say it is for me, myself without reference to anyone or anything else.

My Zen friends are caught in the perfection trap. In their belief system they have a set of "Perfections" to which they strive.

My fellow Bible thumpers may harp on the saying from Jesus which goes "Be perfect just as your Father in heaven is perfect."

English translations of the Bible should be using the word "whole" in place of "perfection." Be whole just as your Father in heaven is whole.

Living whole is much more attainable than trying to be perfect. Perfect is a Greek philosophy category not a Biblical teaching.

Living whole means I have to accept the healing of Grace – unearnable merit – into my life. I can't be perfect. I'm just making the best of a bad situation.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

49. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Luzer

For the film version of “Cabaret” Broadway song writers Kandler and Ebb gave Liza Minnelli a signature song – *Maybe This Time*.

Sadly the lyrics of *Maybe This Time* are sung by almost the entire human race.

“Maybe this time. For the first time, love won’t hurry away ... Everybody loves a winner so nobody loved me. But maybe this time for the first time . . .” Sadly this character never finds a staying kind of love before the story ends.

Everybody loves a winner so nobody loved me! We here in the cancer ward are all luzers. We lost the genetic lottery and we lost the health lottery.

We in the cancer ward are worse than half of the American sports teams this week. With mandatory overtime there are no tied games. Whose gonna win the games this week? I can guarantee that half the teams will be luzers.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

50. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

My Mother Learns What a Gift Is

My mother came from a sharecroppers' shack in LA – lower Alabama. Born in the 1920s to hard scrabble people in a hard scrabble time and place. How hard? I have an uncle who died unnamed at 18 months. You can see his grave marker in Samson, Alabama. It reads “Little Brother Brewer.”

WW2 gave my parents vast new opportunities. In the early 1950s they began building a family and business. In the late 1960s my mother began to buy herself grow-a-diamond. Put a diamond chip on a ring and instantly you have an “engagement ring.” She kept trading in smaller chips and buying larger ones.

In 1976, she offered me her last half carat in the series for me to use as an engagement ring for my fiancée “Mary.” Mary accepted the ring and we were married in May, 1976.

In the fall of 1978, Mary informed me that I would soon no longer be her husband. I told my parents about the divorce which was quickly approaching.

My mother wanted “HER DIAMOND” back! Many phone calls were made by my mother to me and Mary. Mother wanted the diamond ring back!!! Mary replied, “No.”

STOP: Reread this passage aloud two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

51. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

I've Seen Death and It's Nothing to
be Scared of: One Night, I Saw an
Angel Comforting a Dying Patient.
Countless Others Have Told Me About
Their Spellbinding Visions. There is
Nothing to Fear – Julie McFadden, UKDailyMail,
December 24, 2024

Hospice nurses and others have quietly reported what this headline says. They're almost silent because of our near universal fear of decline, dying, and death. These stories appear in a few books.

Southern Gospel music star Wendy Bagwell wrote:

Walk Around Me Jesus

Walk around me Jesus, walk around . . .
Walk around my bedside Lord . . .
. . . Told us the Lord had been walking all around . . .
And in the night she closed her eyes,
we could hear her singing
Walk around me Jesus, walk around

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

52. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

3:00 A.M.

Three o'clock in the morning. Really, three o'clock in the dark!

This time is so fearful to so many it was used in a presidential campaign. "Who do you want answering the White House bedside telephone at three in the morning?!"

In the last couple of years, when I awake at three I begin breathing and praying slowly. I use my prayer word maranatha. Pronounced in my imagination as ma-ra-na-tha. Which is New Testament Greek word for "Come Lord."

I bring to mind the names of those in bed with me one by one – wife Terry, fur baby Pete, fur baby Juliet. Each name gets a maranatha.

Then if there are more names they just arise on their own. I drift off to sleep every time.

Try it you'll like it.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

53. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

The Hungriest Black Hole EVER Detected:
Terrifying Void Devours Matter at Over
FORTY Times the Theoretical Limit
- William Hunter, UKDailyMail, November 4, 2024

“... the theoretical limit” I just love it when the experts have to announced that they have been wrong!

But even this black hole is not as big as the one I can fall into when I'm depressed about my state.

No bigger holes exist than the ones I jump into or ones I dig myself.

My deep hole can beat your deep hole's ass!

But suddenly I _____ and my deep hole disappears!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly three times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

54. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Walking in the Alabama Rain

Last fall I took several days to travel to Alabama to see cousins and others before they die. That's what we old people do!

During breakfast the local weather forecast told me that there would be off-and-on rain. In Alabama this means a soft rain all day.

I flashed back over fifty years. In the car, I put Jim Croce on to play. He was part of the soundtrack of my youth:

“ . . . But now and then I find myself thinkin' of the days when we were walkin' in the Alabama rain . . . ”

I had a long visit with cousins both in their 80s, both with cancers, both confined to their recliners. Married over 60 years. In the same home, nearly 50 years. And this is what it comes down to? Seeing long lost cousins? We didn't gossip about relatives! Oh, no - - we updated our prayer lists about those rascals. Especially the dead ones. They're not around to correct our memories!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

55. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

The Princess and the Pea . . .

. . . is an European folktale. There are several different versions even a Broadway musical – “Once Upon a Mattress.”

The story goes that a wannabee princess had to sleep soundly for a whole night on a stack of mattresses. The wicked queen mother hides one small pea under a very low mattress. If a wannabee princess felt the tiny pea she wasn’t good enough for her son.

Recently in March, 2024 the whole world heard that a princess found a “pea” in her body and is now being treated for cancer.

How many “peas” do I find in me? How many do I ignore?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

56. Sing this passage aloud three times.

Midnight Come and Me Need Go Poop!

Midnight come and me need go poop!

Midnight come and me need go poop!

Oh O ni-i-a-ght!

Midnight come and me need go poop!

Tissue man, tissue man tally me some tissue!

Daylight come and me need go poop!

Daylight come and me need go poop!

Oh O da-ai-ay break!

Daylight come and me need go poop!

Tissue man, tissue man tally me some tissue!

Damn this healing chemo!

STOP: Sing this song two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third singing.

57. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

I'm A Palliative Care Nurse and I
Look After Patients on Their
Deathbeds – These Are the Top
5 Regrets I Hear from People In
Their Final Days

– Ellen Coughlan, Mailonline, October 30, 2024

Oh yes palliative care! My father-in-law (Bob) would say “Richard hand me one of those ‘feel good happy popsicles.’”

My mother-in-law (Molly) never made it to assisted living where Bob was. Her unconscious mind took over and was delivering her often made request “I don’t want to live without Bob.” Be careful what you tell yourself. She died nine days before her husband.

While using Molly’s electric scooter to return from the dining room where we had supper Bob said “We should have moved into assisted living two years ago!”

Waiting too late. Will that be my regret(s)?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

58. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Wudda, Cudda, Shudda

I had the pleasure of seeing Broadway musical mega star Patti LuPone in concert. It was just her, a grand piano, and a fantastic pianist.

She called her show “Wudda, Cudda, Shudda.” Since she is now a senior professional she gets to decide what she sings.

In “Wudda, Cudda, Shudda” she chose songs she would have sung if she’d had the chance; the songs she could have sung but turned down the role; and, the songs she should have sung but didn’t.

In “Wudda, Cudda, Shudda” Miss LuPone was checking off her list by performing the songs she missed and/or loves and always wanted to sing.

Wudda – would have.

Cudda – could have.

Shudda – should have.

Wudda, cudda, shudda are the big turds in my emotional septic tank.

If I had a chance to do _____ over I would have _____.

If I had a chance to do _____ over I could have _____.

If I had a chance to do _____ over I should _____.

If I wallow in these three, I will drown in my own little emotional septic tank.

There is Franz Schubert’s “Unfinished Symphony.” I heard a wise one say “All lives are unfinished symphonies.”

What will be my unfinished symphony?

The great thing about being at my end is I can sing all the songs I've left unsung.

Join in singing with me!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

59. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

When I Was Born

There's a wisdom saying that is labeled "Cherokee Proverb." It might just be the product of an ad agency's copy writer. But here it is – just for we to read aloud:

When I was born, I cried and the world
rejoiced. I must live my life so that
when I die, the world cries and I rejoice.

True? I have the power to make it true.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

60. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

God Laughs

Sometimes I imagine that God has a physical body just like mine. When I meet God face-to-face what do I find?

God has no ears. I've talked God's ears off.

God has no tears. God laughed at me until tears came.

God has no butt. God laughed his butt off watching me.

We humans, including me, are an eternal slapstick comedy show.

I enjoy TruTV's "The World's Funniest." Endless videos of humans doing stupid, funny stuff could be me.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

61. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

The Dash

I once heard an inmate of a maximum security prison wisely say,

“On your grave marker, the important things aren’t the date of your birth and the date of your death. . . .

“ . . . The important thing is the dash (sic) between your birth and death dates. (The dash is called a hyphen.)

The wise man continued “The important thing is what did you during the dash. How did you live during your dash to death?”

Great wisdom from an inmate serving time for homicide.

I have to agree also with this wisdom:

“I have no choice from the moment of my birth except to race toward death with all the strength I have.”

Makes me stop and think.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

62. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times

Home. Home! Home?!

When I had an almost fatal health crisis, home is where I wanted to be. But . . .

Thomas Wolfe wrote “You Can’t Go Home Again” where time changed what was home so much it is unrecognizable.

“Tuscaloosa’s Calling Me . . . But I’m Not Going!” An Off-Broadway musical where Tuscaloosa, Alabama serves as a fly away escape fantasy location instead of grim Manhattan, NYC.

The Torrejon de Ardoz I knew isn’t there anymore. In the 1980s I worked out of Spain – keeping a flat in Torrejon a Madrid suburb. On a recent Madrid 2024 visit, I was going to show my wife the neighborhood where I lived. Razed. It ain’t there! Nada. Zip. Replaced by an up market ‘burb.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

63. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Mildew, Mold, Decay

I'm from the Deep South (Alabama) where damp rules all year long. Sometimes its hot and damp; sometimes cool and damp.

To misquote Harper Lee in the opening of *To Kill a Mockingbird* – in those hot, humid summer days ladies would fully powder themselves and then melt like teacakes by midday.

In such a climate, mildew, mold and decay were constant problems. The older, and old buildings were all made of untreated wood. Siding and porches would easily rot and fall down.

There are days when I feel like those old wooden buildings fighting a losing battle against mildew, mold, decay and their buddy gravity. Rotting and falling down.

Or like a spiritual director of mine, James Finley, said at a retreat in Tuscon, Arizona “Here we all are just sitting like candles. Brightly aflame while melting in the desert sun.”

But, such is the way of us humans.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

64. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

More Haiku by me

Alone and lonely
in Piccadilly Circus
Christmas Eve lonely

#####

North, honk, north go north
Canuck geese go north. Human
Canucks honk next month

#####

The Baby Boomers' Lament

The young always win
'Cause the old always die first
Shit! Oh well, anyway

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

65. Read this message aloud, three times.

WOW!

Cheech and Chong, the most famous potheads in current American memory, had the correct attitude toward life.

On stage and screen, helped by marijuana consumption they were always surprised “Wow!” about many many things.

Like precognitive young children, they were surprised into a WOW continually.

I need to keep the WOW attitude at the forefront of my mind, heart, gut and life.

WOW that tasted good. WOW that was a good bowel movement. WOW the dark, cloud filled sky is beautiful. WOW that concrete wall is full of nature. (Concrete is mostly limestone and pebbles or gravel.)

WOW I didn’t verbally kick anyone’s ass in the past hour.
WOW I didn’t get my ass kicked in the past hour.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

66. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Bumper Sticker Wisdom

Sometimes I wrestle
with my demons.
Sometimes we just snuggle.

How true! Demons feed on my fear. What if I starved my demons by snuggling with them instead of fearing them?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

67. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

From the UK DailyMailonline April 9, 2024:

“I Endured Aggressive Chemo and said
Goodbye to My Family After Being
Given Just 15 Months to Live - - Only
to Discover I Never Had Cancer.”

- UK DailyMailonline, April 9, 2024

“Lisa Monk, from College Station in Texas, was told she had
terminal cancer.”

I’d be soooooooooo pissed!!!

I’d be soooooooooo happy!!!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

68. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Why We’re Choosing to Keep Our
Cancers Secret After Being
Diagnosed in the Peak of Our Lives

- Cassidy Morrison, DailyMal.com, October 6, 2024

In this article, several celebrities were mentioned who had kept
their cancers private.

There’s the miracle. People keeping their yaps shut.

Weepy, sad stories have overtaken sports broadcasting. To fill time, I have to hear about athletes' family members and their sad stories.

Just play the game!

If I want sad, I'll tune to The Hallmark Channel.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

69. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Stars

I once visited Maunakea Visitor Information Station down the mountain from the Gemini Observatory on the Big Island of Hawaii.

We were blessed with a dark moon night. No moon! No moonlight!

This is the spot where "clear sky" is defined by all stargazers.

The sky was so clear.

I looked up and could see more stars than I knew existed. Then I looked through big binoculars. WOW!!! Even more stars than I knew existed.

The light from those stars had traveled for gazillions of years to reach my eyes. The light from those stars would travel gazillions of more years after quickly passing me by.

I felt so small.

Like cancer in my body: There are zillions of cancer cells. All of these cells will die and quickly pass me by. Or, I may die with them and then they will die too.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

70. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Saint Augustine(?) said “. . . In the wilderness, hope is an active verb. That hope had two beautiful daughters – anger and courage. Hope depends on anger over what could be but is not, and on courage to make it different. . .”

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

71. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Yes, Niece, There Really Is A Santa Claus

I heard that my twenty-something niece had told her mom “I quit believing in anything when I quit believing in Santa Claus.”

I wrote to my niece that yes there really is a Santa Claus and that Santa appears when we least expect him.

I improved of the Apostle Paul in this paraphrase.

Love is not in a hurry, shows compassion, it doesn't covet anyone's ass (wealth.)

Love kicks evil's butt. Love always hopes for my best.

Love is always there. I cannot out run it.

Love removes my dirty diapers. Love wipes my shitty butt. Love slips puts fresh Depends pull-ups on me.

Love listens to my mumbling. Love dabs the drool off my chin.

Love clips my eyebrows and nose hairs.

This is how I see Santa (Holy) Claus at work each day.

Even after he had retired Mister Rogers was brought back after the 9-11 attacks. He was asked to speak to children about what they were seeing on their TV screens. He said –

“Always look for the helpers.”

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

GO look for the helpers. Be a helper.

72. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Breakthrough That Means Most
Lethal Cancer is a Death Sentence
No More: How Miracle Drug That
Makes Tumors Disappear Has
Stunned Doctors

- Luke Chafer, UK Daily Mail, October 12, 2024

What stuns me is the media I read and get sucked into the
researchers' PR B.S. over and over again.

Each month brings a new headline about a new miracle drug.

Do I dare get my hopes up? Again?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

73. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Once upon a time, I had a mansion. This three story mansion had a huge formal front garden and a large informal one in back. I slept in a pup tent in the woods on my property.

I arranged for catering with lots of food, tents, porta potties, and valet parking. I invited all of my family, friends, enemies, and acquaintances to this BBQ.

They all came. We drank, ate, and wandered the beautiful grounds. Eventually we all gathered to hear from me. They asked “Can we go inside?” I had servants bring ladders so that we could look in the beautifully cleaned windows to see the more beautiful interiors.

Still my guests asked, “Can we go inside?” I had to admit that I’ve never been in my beautiful mansion. I’ve never used the key.

Did I use the key? Did I go inside? What about today? Is the door to my mansion locked? - A parable heard from James Finney.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

74. Read this passage aloud, three times.

Return On Failure John Maxwell

I recently heard one of my teachers say, “What is your return on failure?” He reminded me that ROI was “return on investment” but challenged me to consider what returns my failures have brought me. How have my failures benefited me?

Maxwell made me pause to review all the failures of my seventy years. And in remembering each one, I had to consider the benefits of each of my failures.

Cancer is not something I meant to make an investment in. But what is/are the benefits of having cancer? What are the benefits of battling cancer?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

75. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Haiku by Richard Hicks

Vomit tree blooming
Hebrew Bible prof calling
Down chain saw death

Good-bye Booger
An old couple holds
An even older Booger
Needle in, good-bye

I have my fears
But they don't have me
I return my fears

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

76. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Where Is Susan Smith Now? A Look At Her
Life in Prison 30 Years After Drowning Her
Sons Lynsey Eidell, People magazine November 21, 2023

When I read this headline the tragic story came flooding back. Smith a twenty-something mother of two young sons had the hots in her own mind for her boss. She lusted that if she could get rid of her sons, her boss would fall madly in love with her.

She drove to a deserted boat ramp at a local lake.

The boys were strapped into their baby seats. She got out of the car and let the car roll down the ramp into the lake. Her sons drowned while strapped in their safety seats.

I've struggled with this story since first learning about this tragedy.

Could I forgive Susan then? Can I forgive Susan now?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

77. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Holding Things Together

With respect to Merle Haggard's lyrics:

Holding things together ain't no easy thing to do.
When it comes to fighting cancer it's a job meant for two.
When it comes to dying of cancer it's a job meant for two.

As I fight cancer, as I decline, as I die, it's a fight I gotta have help with.

The spiritual master Thomas Merton said, "On your death bed . . . even if all of your family and friends crawl into bed with you . . . you are the only one doing the dying . . ."

I am alone. Hold my hand.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

78. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Inviting Our Suffering Onto The Dance Floor

- Robert Masters masterscenter.net

Robert Masters wrote this while he was fighting cancer.

“. . . To know without thinking,
to see without eyes,
to fly without wings,
to die without leaving,
to love without expecting . . .
like wild blue sky behind a sea of clouds. . .”

A dance floor infinitely larger than that of my school gym. I
have to summon the courage not to sit along the wall.

I have to get in the dance!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

79. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

I Say A Little Prayer for You at 3:00 a.m.

Burt Bacharach and Hal David wrote a hit pop tune just for me to use at 3:00 am. They didn't know it was for me but I thank them nevertheless!

I have found that when I awake at 3:00 a.m. I can recall the tune "Say a Little Prayer for You" and take my mind off of me – my favorite subject.

With the delightful tune playing in my memory, I can quickly recall persons, places, things and ideas which need a prayer or a thanking.

Say a little prayer for you – Terry Ann – say a little prayer for you- Holli – say a little prayer for – me -, etc. . . .

And I always drift back into untroubled sleep.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

80. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

In My Haiku Book

The world's not comin'
To an end my friend
The world's a comin' to a start
- Lyrics by Peter Udell from the musical "Purlie."

Earth, water, fire, air, space
Combine to make this food
Numberless beings gave
Their lives and labors
That we may eat
May we be nourished
That we may nourish life
- by Joan Halifax

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

81. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

**EMERGENCY ALERT BALLISTIC MISSILE
THREAT INBOUND TO HAWAII. SEEK
IMMEDIATE SHELTER. THIS IS NOT
A DRILL.** Wikipedia

Across Hawaii civil defense sirens blew. For 38 minutes this was the official word from the Hawaii Emergency Services Office.

Seek shelter now. NUCLEAR missiles are gonna drop on your head!

For 38 minutes, while we await pathology to answer the only question I care about – it is cancer?!

39 minutes later, “Oops! We made a mistake. All is fine. Or, Richard I have bad news. . . .”

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

82. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Imogene Thomas Reveals She ‘Cries
Herself to Sleep’ After Learning
Her Mother Has Terminal Illness –
and Admits She Feels Jealous of
Ablebodied Families Who Get to
Live Normal Lives

- Poppy Atkinson Gibson, UKDailyMail, July 27, 2024

When I have cancer my entire family and close circle have cancer. I get the treatments. They get the hassle, my emotions, and grief.

Do not covet is a favorite Commandment of mine. Coveting? Don't I mean envy, greed, and jealousy are along for the ride too?

Why me?! Why not someone else?! I want what I see them having cancer! At least I'm not using the antisocial social media.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

83. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Trouble in Paradise, Part One

I heard my teacher James Finley tell this story from his life.

The Finleys are both psychoanalysts in private practice in Southern California. Each September they holiday at the same Hawaii beach condo apartment.

Jim said that he comes out on the lanai to drink his coffee and watch the surf roll in. Each lanai is separated by flimsy bamboo walls that let the breezes blow through.

He says, “I set my mug down. I set my butt down. I take a sip from the mug. And . . .

The guy on my right lights up a cigar. The guy on the left begins a loud call to Wall Street. Trouble in paradise.”

What are my troubles in my little paradise?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

84. Read is passage aloud, slowly three times.

Trouble in Paradise, Part Two

I heard my teacher James Finley tell this story too.

September holiday. Same condo. Same lanai. Same beach.

Same coffee mug. Same silence. Same surf rolling in.

Downstairs neighbor comes running out holding her cell phone, screaming. “Turn on your TV!!! A terrible tragedy in New York!!!”

Trouble in paradise again on this September 11, 2021.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

85. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

I do not understand what I do. I do what
I don't want to do; but I do what
I hate. - Romans 7.16 GN

I agree with both Romans and Butch Hancock lyrics:

My mind's got a mind of its own
It takes me out a walkin' when I'd rather stay home

Take me out to parties when I'd rather be alone
My mind's got a mind of its own . . .

I seem to forget half the things I start
I try to build a house and then tear the place apart
I freeze myself on fire, and then I burn myself on ice
I can't count to one without thinking twice . . .

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

86. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Is Your God Big Enough for Randomness?!

Cancer is like riding on the night train with Kenny Rogers.

“You’ve got to know when to hold ‘em
Know when to fold ‘em
Know when to walk away . . .” (Don Schiltz lyrics)

Some people live with a God who practices “close governance” (Calvin) keeping a close watch and thumb on them.

The God I worship not only lets me tag along but lets me play poker with him.

As Schiltz wrote “. . . every hand's a winner, every hand's

a loser, the best you can hope for is to die in your sleep.”

Yea, that’s it. I wanna die in my sleep!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

87. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Doctors Thought I Had Acid Reflux -
Now I’ve Got Six Months to Live:
Agony of Mother, 34, Diagnosed With
Bowel Cancer Who Fears Her Three-
Year-Old Daughter ‘Will Forget Me’
- Rebecca Whittaker, Mailonline, April 19, 2024

This mom is correct. Daughter is now three. Mom will be dead when the daughter is four and a half.

Children at this age generally can’t testify in court because they don’t know fantasy from reality. Memory isn’t a big skill for preschool children.

Will anyone remember me? Maybe in the reruns sense. Watching a rerun on TV I use my smart phone to lookup actors from long ago TV shows.

I generally am surprised and say “I thought he/she was dead.”

I’ll be in the same category of: Dead? Not dead?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

88. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Who Do You Love?

About 1970, in the Los Angeles Veterans Hospital full of Vietnam vets. In one of the first drug and alcohol drying out residential programs; a room is dark. There is a circle of folding chairs. In each, a silent Vietnam vet trying to get clean and sober.

In the middle of the circle are two chairs. One chair is empty. One taken by a patient who will be asking one question. A new patient fresh from the street, not quite sober, comes into the room and sits in the empty chair in the middle of the room.

The patient facing the new arrival asks, “Who do you love?”

The new man says “My wife.” All the other men stand, point, and shout “BULL SHIT” then sit down.

“Again, I ask, who do you love?” New guy searching for the correct answer, “My kids!” Again, “BULL SHIT” is the chorus.

“Again, who do you love?” New guy desperately responds, “My mom?!” Again, “BULL SHIT!”

“Who do you love?” New guy, crying, says, “My self.”

Standing ovation. Each man stands in line to welcome and hug the new man.

Who do I love? Who do I love best?

STOP: Read this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

89. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

How To Pray When You're Pissed
At God or Anyone Else for that Matter

A book by Ian Punnett

My biggest question is “WHY ME?!”

Ian's question is my number two question – How do I pray when I'm pissed at God and everyone else?

How big is my god? From experience I've found that the god I worship is reeeeeeally BIG.

And my God welcomes a good life and death talk about WHY ME?! Even with cussing, screaming and yelling.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

90. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Haiku by Richard Hicks

Not all will go well
But all is workable

Damn lies. Everyone has one.
Let's talk about your family.

Issues? Everyone has issues.
My wife and I have subscriptions!

. . . Oz never did give nothing
to the Tin Man . . . that he didn't
already have . . . — Dewey Bunnell

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

91. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Expect the Best
Prepare for the Worst
Thrive in Whatever Comes
- Zig Ziglar

I can still hear my teacher Zig Ziglar inspirationally saying these words – expect the best; prepare for the worst; thrive in whatever comes.

Best.

Worst.

Whatever.

With cancer I get to live out some of Zig's life. He was a guy who was filling arenas with paying audiences who were looking for a positive message. Then one of his adult children dies. Best. Worst. Whatever.

I need to reread his “Confessions of a Grieving Christian” and insert myself into the story.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

92. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

To Whom It May Concern

This week I found a flier with your name on it. This letter assumes that you placed it on my front door.

The flier says “Four things you have to know in order to go to HEAVEN.”

Know? Knowledge?

My wife is eaten up with dementia. She doesn't know her name.

Our profoundly retarded adult child has never known his name.

So no know, no heaven?

Thanks for your flier but I'll be with my wife and child in hell knowing that I didn't betray their trust in me.

Thank you.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

93. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

How White Poop Was a Telltale Sign
I Had Lethal Pancreatic Cancer [at] 32
- Emily Joshu, Dailymail.com, April 15, 2024

Wow! Talk about clear, loud signals!

Makes me wonder about the signals I'm not seeing? How many do I not want to see?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

94. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Doctors Warn 130,000 Americans Are
Living with Undiagnosed Advanced
Cancer: “Ticking Time Bomb”

- Milya Focht, Health Reporter, dailymail.com 14 October, 2024

Truth? Or are doctors trying to “scare-up” some more
business?!

What am I to do? During the Covid panic lock down I was
told/ordered to stay inside. Even my cardioelectrician didn’t
want to touch me or share the same air. I had my first video
doctor visit.

Also, I hear about people who are killed by cancer even
though they were doctor examined numerous times.

Fear. Fear is the mind killer. Frank Herbert “Dune.”

Fear. Fear not said Gabriel in his visit to the Virgin. Fear not
sang the heavenly chorus to the shepherds.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

95. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

We Are Like Prisoners In An Unguarded Cell . . .

No one confines us against our will, and we have heard that the key that will release us is also locked inside.

If we could find the key, we could open the door and be free. This is not a meaningless metaphor.

We are prisoners of our ego,
chained by our fears,
restricted in our freedom,
suffering from our condition.

No one prevents us from searching for the key that would free us.

We must, however, know where to look for it and be willing to use it once we have discovered where it is. Don Riso in *Understanding the Enneagram*

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

95. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Don't Fear The Reaper

All our times have come
Here but now they're gone
Seasons don't fear the reaper
Nor do the wind, the sun or the rain
We can be like they are

- Lyrics by Donald Roeser

- Recorded and made popular by Blue Oyster Cult

Awake after midnight, lying in my bed I sometimes listen to the Coast-to-Coast radio show. The hosts on Coast sometimes have guests or callers who have seen "Shadow People."

Maybe my "Shadow Person" is my own Reaper. Just hanging around, at the ready if he's needed.

Maybe I'm like an avocado or banana. They sit on my counter. I'm their reaper. I have to wait for just the right moment. I will reap no fruit before its time!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

96. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Am I Crazy?

During a visit to the mental asylum, I asked the director what are the standards that defined crazy? That I'm in need of hospitalization?

The director said, "We fill a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the patient and ask him/her to empty the bathtub.

I said, "A sane, normal person would use the bucket."

"No," said the director, "A normal person would pull the plug.

Richard, do you want a room with or without a view?"

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

97. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

I'm Okay?

Thomas Harris wrote an extremely popular book entitled "I'm OK, You're OK." I had friends at the time who would read all the latest self-help books. Then we'd sit around drinking while spouting wisdom from the latest one.

Now at 70, I have some updates to my wisdom spouts.

I'm OK, You're OK.

I'm OK, You're OK. But those people aren't OK.

I'm OK, You're OK. But your spouse isn't OK.

I'm OK, You're OK. But your baby is ugly!

I'm OK, you stink. Get outta here!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

98. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

No Apologies

Joshua Berman, finds no one asking an apology and no one asking for forgiveness in the Bible. He only finds the offended person kissing the offender.

“No person in the Bible ever asks another for forgiveness and no one ever grants another person forgiveness.”

(blogs.timesofisrael.com/no-apologies-just-a-kiss)

And, I, Richard Hicks, in the Bible never finds anyone saying “please” and/or “thank you.” Except for the one leper who returned for his healing.

And, those speaking are order barking jerks – including Jesus. “You! Follow me!” Not “Would you follow me please?”

No one ever asks “How do you feel about blah, blah, blah.” Or, “I hope you’re not offended when I say – love one another, etc.” The teachers silently all say “Suck it up buttercup.”

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

99. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Occam or Rube?

Occam's Razor is attributed to William of Ockham a 1300s philosopher. Occam's Razor says that the most simple solution is the correct one. Wikipedia

Rube Goldberg (1883 – 1970) was an American cartoonist. He created drawings of extremely complicated table top machines which could do the simple things for us. Many governments sadly use this type of logic to create the hell in which we live.

For my cancer, do I want Occam's Razor to be used or a Rube Goldberg machine?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

100. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Cancer
Cancer!
Cancer!!
Cancer!!!
Cancer!!!
Cancer!!!
CANCER!!!

Good. Now I'm reminded why I'm writing this.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

101. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

1 in 400 Trillion

I'm one in 400 trillion!

Me being alive is a one in 400 trillion chance. That's really good odds or a miracle. - Are You a Miracle? On the Probability of Your Being Born, by Dr. Ali Minazir, Huffpost.com, August 16, 2011.

WOW! Staying alive is the best way I can honor the odds!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

102. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Will Rogers

It is said of Will Rogers that he often said, “I’ve never met a man I didn’t like.”

He needed to meet more people.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

103. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

The Dead Man Sings

George Jones, had a way of coming back from the dead every few years when he dried out.

I lived in Nashville when one of his come back songs went to number one and became a standard. He wrote, recorded and released “He Stopped Loving Her Today.” It still tears my heart out!

But I’ve found a Jones recording an even sadder song – “I’ll be over you when the grass grows over me.” These lyrics of Don Chapel not only still tear my heart out but offer me a challenge.

In my current state, both songs make me wonder: Who will come to my funeral?; and, when I'm dead and buried will I still love?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

104. Read this passage slowly three times.

“Do You Want To Be Healed?”

“Do you want to be healed?” Jesus famously asked. Many medical folks have wanted to ask this of patients.

How would I have to change if I was suddenly healed?

How would my identity change if I was known as a person who was healed of cancer?

How would my relationships change? Would I have to go back to work to earn more money?

What would be my life's work after I am healed?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

105. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

An Irish Blessing Haiku

Wind be at your back
When spitting and/or pissing
Then you will be dry

Am I spitting, pissing into the wind? I need to find this out about myself.

U.S. President Lyndon Johnson (LBJ) famously said: Don't piss on my boots and tell me it is raining!

Am I pissing on my own boots? I need to examine my boots.

And, LBJ said, "I'd rather have an enemy inside my tent pissing out than to have him outside pissing into my tent."

In life with cancer, it is hard for me to tell friend from foe.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

106. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Scientists Reveal Origin of Cancer Risk Gene
was 18th Century Family from Remote
Scots Island

- Paula Murray, The Scottish Daily Mail, 6 June, 2024

I read this headline joyfully and shouted, “My cancer is not my fault!”

My cancer is the fault of those pasty faced, kilt wearing Scots!

It feels great to lay-off my troubles on someone else.

But, it is still my cancer.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

107. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Tree Climbing Ducks

by Ashley Logsdon of DIScovering You

Have you ever seen ducks climb trees? No? Me either.

But that is exactly what medical people want me to do far too often.

Bless their hearts, medical folks are paid to push through as many patients as possible. They use language and equipment I don't understand but I'm supposed to trust them and the tools with my health; with my life.

I'm supposed to be a tree climbing duck!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

108. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

How Old Is Old?

How old is old? How old am I? How old do I feel? How much older will I get?

How old is my god? How big is my god? Older and bigger than me? Maybe.

“World’s oldest cave painting is at least 51,200 years old, scientists say. . . . in Indonesia . . .” (NBC News, July 4, 2024.)

If my god is here with me now in my cave, what was my god doing 51,200 years ago?

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

109. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Scientists Discover a Lost Continent Hiding
Between Canada and Greenland that Formed 60
Million Years Ago - Nikki Main, Dailymail.com 19 July, 2024

How old is old? How big is big? How big is my god?

Was my god surfing this continent down to the bottom 60
million years ago?

My answer to this question will help me now when I need a
really big god.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

110. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Wisconsin School Shooting Victim
. . . Family Forgives Killer . . . at
Teen's Funeral Service
- Katherine Donlevy, New York Post, December 21, 2024

Forgive my child's killer? Forgive my child's killer
publicly? Forgive my child's killer publicly at my child's funeral?

Oh, no! Oh, hell no!

Forgiving is a long, repeated process of back and forth.

Now I'm dealing with – can I forgive my god for not protecting me against cancer?

Now I'm dealing with – can I forgive my god for making cancer?

Forgiving is a great idea. Forgiving the cancer. Forgiving God. Forgiving myself.

Forgiving myself is gonna be the hardest.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after this third reading

111. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times

Doctors Told These Women They Were
Dying. The First Thing They Did Was
Leave Their Husbands: Inside the
Alarming Trend of “Cancer Divorces”

- DailyMail, January 27, 2025

Maybe these women said to themselves and to their divorce lawyers, “Cancer may kill me but I will die free of that bastard!”

What will I do when the doctor gives me the bad news?

I'm reminded of the wisdom of a champion prize fighter,
“All the training. All the planning goes BOOM when he lands

and punch on my delicate nose.”

Ouch! Mommy! Daddy!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

112. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Fly, Run, Walk, Stand, Sit, Lie Down

I’ve often heard the Hebrew Prophet Isaiah misquoted by stopping too early “. . . they will mount up with the wings of an eagle . . .” (Isaiah 40.31)

Reading the fuller quote “. . . they will mount up with the wings of an eagle, (AND) they will run and not be tired, (AND) they will walk without fainting.” (Isaiah 40.31)

From my little life I can complete Isaiah’s words:

Fly, Run, Walk, Stand, Sit, and finally Lie Down maybe to die.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

113. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.”

Tension

I, as all people, live in the in-between. This lifelong in-betweenness can bring tension. I live in tension my entire life. I want to learn the end of the drama. I long to know the final score of a game. Give me closure, dammit!!! Life gives me tension not closure.

We Americans have elinated tension in sports. We love overtime or sudden death playoffs. This means that each week half of the teams will be luzers. No tension! Yeah us!

Sing, “Yes Jesus loves me” – STOP, HOLD. Live in the tension of an unfinished tune.

Sometimes I’m the statue.
Sometimes I’m the birds.

Sometimes I’m the bug.
Sometimes I’m the windshield.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

114. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

World's Oldest Calendar Discovered in
Ancient Temple May Rewrite Birth of
Civilization — studyfinds.org reviewed by Chris Melore

Do I feel old? Do I feel full of wisdom? Do I have all the
answers about history?

In southern Turkey at Gobekli Tepe scientists have found a
calendar that is 12,000 years old! Take that Egypt!

Makes my life and my calendar keeping seem tiny.

A word-a-day calendar would need 4,380,000 words!

Probably shows an appointment that was missed on day one.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

115. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

High School Gives Heartless Ultimatum
to Cancer Survivor Teen Who Grew Hair
Long to Celebrate Overcoming Disease
- by Mitchell Goodbar, dailymail.com, August 16, 2024

Chemo had taken his hair.

The leaders at his high school spat in his face. To hell with your feelings and your celebration. To hell with your healing! You are suspended!

I know a then teen boy who grew his hair long. He then shaved his head donating his long locks to a charity that made wigs for bald chemo patients. This was to honor his grandmother who was fighting cancer.

His classmates ridiculed his long hair. Then they ridiculed his bald head.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

116. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Inside King Charles' Cancer Battle:
... He Has Not Revealed Which Type
of the Disease He is Fighting.

- By Elena Salvoni, DailyMail, August 17, 2024

It's none ya biz! It is none of your business!! Pray for healing and **MIND YOUR OWN DAMN BUSINESS!!!**

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

117. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

But what about Area 52?

North of Las Vegas, Nevada there is an U.S. military joint use base. It is popularly known as “Area 51.” This is where the government supposedly keeps secrets from We The People. But Hollywood has done enough speculation on screen, that even the blind can see what’s probably there.

But what about Area 52? If there’s a 51, what about 52? What about areas number 1 to 50? What happened to them?

This also how I think about cancer.

Is my cancer Cancer 51, or 50 or 52? What happened to all my other cancers numbers 1 to 50?

Questions, questions, questions.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

118. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Angels?!

Cue the music. “I believe in angels . . .” ABBA just sang on my music machine.

Better be careful. Believing in angels is easy. Meeting angels is scary!

An angel is one who brings a divine message to me. A message of “comfort and joy?” – not always.

Sometimes it is a message of gloom and doom if I’m lucky. Sometimes a severe butt-kicking!

Do I want to meet angels? Touched by An Angel on the Highway to Heaven? Even if Della Reese and Michael Landon both appear, no thanks I have too many bruises already.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

119. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Look In The Mirror

How big is my God? Look in the mirror. I will confess most of the time I am my own god. All I have to do to see my god is to look in a mirror.

What a pissant, puny god I am!!!

What Came Before the Big Bang? . . . Physicist's
New Popular Science Book Explains One Leading
Theory — University of Buffalo News Center, March 31, 2022

Professor Peter A. Rogerson's book "An Infinity of Worlds" really fingers my problem when he deals with ". . .the weird and wondrous world of cosmic inflation."

It could read – The weird and wondrous Richard and his ego inflation.

I gotta gaze at clouds. I gotta gaze at stars. I gotta gaze at dirt.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

120. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

Shall We Dance? May I have this dance?

What if my health declined suddenly? Everything was fine until me and my health fell off a cliff. Then a hip replacement was called for but I had to get better. I would be in a wheelchair for a year?

It was at that moment that God asked, “May I have this dance?”

“Dance?” I was outraged. “What do you mean dance? I can’t even walk.”

. . . Answer: “Your spirit knows the steps. Breathe, relax, . . .”

I keep hearing “Shall We Dance” from The King and I playing. Listen! Dance!

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

121. Read this passage aloud, slowly three times.

The Oldest Tree in the World: Meet “Methuselah,”
a Literal Hidden Gem. USAToday May 28, 2024 by Clare
Mulroy and Mythili Devarakonda

How big is my god? Is my god still too small?

WOW! Really, really, big!!!

Methuselah is a bristlecone pine living for over 5,000 years in what is now California’s Inyo National Forest.

But wait. There are human footprints in the white sands ancient lake bed of New Mexico that are between 21,000 to 23,000 years old. (See US Park Service website.)

A tree 5,000 years old?! Humans walking around leaving tracks in mud 23,000 years ago?!

Go gaze at tree bark. Go step in mud.

STOP: Reread this passage aloud, slowly two more times.

STOP: Sit in silence after the third reading.

The End is near!

Haiku by Hicks

Breathing Under Mercy

Mercy falls and fills
Mercy fills the dark places
Mercy fills the cracks

Mercy drips, trickles
Torrents roaring quenches me
Overwhelms, floods, drowns

Gasp! Gurgle! Glug! Spit!
Learning to breathe under mercy
Merci, merci, mer –

The End. “Who is Dan?”

This little book is dedicated to “Dan.” Well who is this Dan? He is Dan Miller the writer and creator of the *48 Days to the Work and Life You Love*.

For many years I’ve been a fan and follower through his books, videos and weekly half-hour podcast.

In about January, 2022, in Euless, Texas I and about fifty others got to spend a whole day with this master.

At the beginning of the day he ask for us to name a big, huge, outrageous goal we had for that year.

My hand shot up and I said to write a book called “Cancer May Kill Me But I Will Die Healed.” Now that was 2022, I am now writing this book in 2026. Here is my butt kick:

On December 29, 2023, I clicked on Dan’s weekly podcast to hear:

“ . . . This was to be the last podcast of 2023. But after 17 years this is the my last podcast. . . . My big news has changed. . . . Here is the new news. . . . I am 76 years old. I am healthy, fit, and strong. Then three weeks ago I was hit with terrible pain inside my middle. Gall bladder? No, stage four pancreatic cancer which has already spread to my liver and bones. Doc said there was nothing medicine could do but manage my pain. . . .”

Now you know why I am writing this book beginning today, Monday, January 8, 2024.

Who knows maybe I will meet my death.

I might beat Dan in the all too human race into the arms of the Lord of Life and Death! Update: Dan died January 21, 2024. He beat me.

Big thanks to Dan and Mrs. Miller!

Other works by Richard Hicks

Decline, Dying, and Death: Be Prepared!
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**Be weird. Weird is wonderful.
Weird is funderful.**

**My life Bible verse “. . . weird
people, zealous of good works.”**

Titus 2.14 (AV helped by RFH)

**Giving is the most fun I can
have clothed not involving fat,
sugar, and chocolate.**