Granny Gristlebone’s Dance Guide for the Clueless:

A gristly guide to hard loving, hard laughing and soft foods.

By
Cinda Tobin
This book of sayings, ideas and meanderings is dedicated to all the Grannies of the world, and their collective wisdom, hopes and resilience in the face of all life has brought to their rocking chairs, for they have not forgotten that life is all about the dance.

I also included this prayer, and those at the end, which are meant for all the lost and suffering little ones, human and animal, who face trouble, isolation and trauma…often alone. “Littles,” refers to any size that needs our love.

________Prayer for the Littles______

Lady bless the little kitties.

Lady bless the little puppies.

Lady bless the little kiddies.

Lady bless those who have so little

And need a little love.

Lady bless the littles.

________Cinda Tobin
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The Dance

FREE TWO-SIDED RUB DANCE

One of my favorite things is rubbing my dog’s belly with my bare feet

My feet are going back and forth

Her butt is going side to side

We both forget our worries and pains

And it don’t cost a dime

Now that’s a dance worth talkin’ ‘bout
THE LADY LUCK DANCE

Lady luck and I were roommates once. She was called Lucy in those days. I explained these things to her:

It’s not in the cards.

It’s not in the dice.

It’s in the dance.

It’s not in the boy.

It’s not in the girl.

It’s in the dance.

It’s not in the people.

It’s not in the planet.

It’s in the dance.

TRAP DANCE

I set a trap under the moon,

Trying to catch a thieving raccoon

Half way home, I heard a ping.

The trap was sprung. We’d caught something.

As I drew near, smell drove me back.

I’d caught something of white and black.
FAST DANCE

I do a fast dance from the barn to the porch. My nap might get away.

TREE DANCING

My nephew Joey thought a bike he would steal
Take it for a spin and bring it back again
Around and around a tree he rode.
And wheee!
Suddenly there the owner be.
Joey now gives this advice:
Never go ‘round the same tree twice.

COFFEE DANCE

You throw the old coffee out
You put the new coffee in
You drip a little water
And you swish it all about
You do the creamy sweetness
And you sit yourself right down
That’s what it’s all about.
MY SUMMER WALTZ

My dance partners:

Light sunburn
Clean sheets
Cold ice cream

DANCE THE DOSIDO

Fireman, painter, quilter, geek
Fighting out the blazing fire
Blazing trails in fiery art
Artistically rebending cloth
Clothing files with bits and bytes
All dancing their own dosido
FISH DANCE

Giggle, jiggle gumdrops

Scales on a flounder

Shrimp doing jigs

Whales waltz and ponder

Neptune plays the tune

Mermaids beat the drums

Nothing like a fish dance

When the big waves come
LIP LAUGHTER DANCE

Past the lips

And over the gums

Down to the tummy

An how fast it runs

Down tired legs

And fills ancient toes

I laugh in the moonlight

As the laughter dance glows
THE BAKER’S DANCE

Cherry pie and
Chocolate cake
One you cook and
One you bake

THE BARNYARD MONEY DANCE

Some say cash just ain’t worth crap
But I say barnyard crap is where it’s at
Fiscal giants are bunches of old big meanies
Who never sold a bag of barnyard bandini

SHADOW DANCE

I do a happy dance every day
So my shadow can twirl in the sunlight.
KITCHEN DANCE

What’s all this about a happy dance?

I tried it in the kitchen

and just stepped on everybody’s toast.

UNDERWEAR DANCE

The band bunches and refuses to budge.

It creeps up from underneath.

The lace rolls and sticks like glue.

It stretches like truth, as we grow older.

Where it ends up, we should not go.

When they droop, they become underwhere.

TOES DANCE

What is all this excitement about a happy dance?

I tried it in the kitchen and I just stepped on everybody’s toast.

DOOR DANCE

Some people I know have to have somebody open a door

or they can’t figure out how to get out of the room.
INDECISION DANCE

I wanted to wear my blue-striped socks,

but I also wanted to wear my green-striped socks.

So I wore the blue ones on my feet,

and wore the green ones as mittens.
Food...Soft and Otherwise

After watching some of these new fangled cooking shows I realized I’d have to change how I digest.

Turning the corner and heading towards the kitchen sink is like sneaking up on a shark; those knives might turn on me any moment.

They say apple pie smell will make you buy a house. Another big city fib. Last time I baked I did no such thing.

The secret three ingredients to a great apple pie are: cinnamon, brandy and vodka…but not in that order.

Broccoli is a fine color. I boil it and use it to cover the bottom of my garbage to soften the rattle of potted ham cans.

Sure, I eat fried food. Nothing I fear ever crawled out of a hot skillet.
I hear you out there. I hear you. “Greens are good for you.” Sure they are, but my mouth waters when I smell a barbecue covered steak. My mouth wants to spit when I smell broccoli cooking.

Chickens are best fresh from someone else’s kitchen.

Don’t decide anything until you’ve had pancakes.

On Wednesdays I eat ice cream with a knife because I wash spoons on Thursdays.

**The Old Devil Melon**

Three o’clock this morning I got a hankerin’ for watermelon. So, I went out back to the garden. By cracky, there was the Devil stealing my melons. The ruckus we made!! We called it a draw. I got my melons back all right. The Devil got to keep his hide.

My hubby and I celebrated his special pie…by eating the pie.

I reply, “Overripe bananas scare me. Overripe bananas.”

People study many years to learn fancy physics. Mother always knew kitchen rules and cosmic rules are the same: waste nothing.

Mandy had me over for a chicken dinner last Friday. I won’t say it was tough, but the knife did run away with the fork.

When I cook a big pot of chili, people come from miles around to visit. Course I am boiling it on the barbecue.

Barbequed armadillo ain’t so bad…kinda like crispy chicken with a side of leprosy.
Family...Legitimate and Otherwise

People say it is hard to tell my hubby Wilferd and I apart. “They have grown to look alike.” He is six feet five. I am five one. I can see how people could get us mixed up. I call him big Willie. Now calm down. I just told you he is a tall man.

My nephew, Roderick, wanted to get smarter so he ordered a correspondence course. He ate a page a day.

My son asked me for a loan by that there e-mail. I told him I’d consider it when I got some real mail.

Ellen talks very little. She runs words around in her head before laying them out. Everyone then takes her words home with them.

Had an in-law come visit who decided he’d just stay and make our couch his new home. Don’t know what happened to him after the day we sold the couch with him on it.
Isn’t the smell of burning hair awful? Uncle Eddie’s fell out so fast it would ignite before it hit the floor.

My sister Carol is a quilter. I’ve been wanting a quilt so I dropped a few hints. I gave her three of my old raggedy dresses, two horse blankets and the dog’s old towel. She made a quilt for the dog.

My sweet sister Carol sews crazy quilts. She made one of a map of our country roads. I followed it to Piney Vail, but couldn’t get back. I got lost in the stitches.

My mindless cousin Terry heard, “A penny for your thoughts,” so he stuffed one in his ear.

My hubby cut up little corns, onions, carrots and some water chestnuts. He added orange sauce and took them on a wok.

My husband Willard wants to be buried with a hacksaw, just in case they close the pearly gates early he can make his own door.
My husband is a creative genius. My son is a computer genius. And I am an ornery genius.

My cousin Rufus, his real name is Robert Gus…wanted to fly so badly. He would attach different things to different parts of his body. He tried aluminum foil, then sheets and then sticks. He duct taped Venetian blinds to his arms. He said, “They look like feathers.” Then he jumped off the garage roof…many times. He never flew—but he always landed.

My useless cousin Vance does the voice-overs for silent movies.

My grandkid Saddie calls me “Awesome ‘Possum.” I’m sure the awesome part came first. Saddie says, “No, it’s cause your apron’s got lots of pockets.”

Take back the toilet seat. My nasty cousin is coming to visit. He thinks he’s the king of the world. I’m planning to hold a royal flush.
My hubby is so stubborn he tried to change a tire once while the car was moving. I forgot he was back there when I drove off.

My Uncle Fred gave up smoking when he served in the desert. He could go weeks without a camel.

My brother Everett is so slow he couldn’t outrun his own dust. Never could sweep it, either.
Just Folks I Plain Don’t Like

My sleazy farmhand, Floyd, wrote himself a new pick up line. “Hey baby, your pickup or mine.” He wrote it in the dirt.

Storms can cause a ruckus, but blowhards always just run out of wind.

There were once Three Wise Men traveling together. It ain’t happened since.

I think you look just fine…after the sun goes down.

Want a cheap thrill? Glue pennies in your pants before you walk around pickpockets.

Some folks are not worth the snot on an old hankie.

No, it wasn’t a wink. I winced cause what you were saying dropped on me like I was a statue in the park.
No matter how you spin bad news, it’s still hard to swallow. Lemon-flavored dirt doesn’t make it anything more than flavorful.
Mother Nature

I’ve never received a greeting card from the blue bird of happiness, just notes he left on my fresh washed pickup.

Fishin’ ain’t relaxin’. It takes a lot of brainpower. I have to catch the worm looking the other way. And don’t get me started on sneaking up on the fish.

I got this new idea that won’t lay down and roll over. I call it my roverlation.

My rooster refused to wake me up one day, so I boiled a pot of water near him, and he ain’t forgot since.

Sunrises are a start at covering mistakes I made last night that moonlight and moonshine didn’t wash away.
In the fall, oaks throw acorns at my house, but I have a slingshot and I throw ‘em back.

Is it right to say a dead frog croaked?

I keep scorpions out of my house by leaving piles of fuzzy dog hair in the dark corners. You laugh now. Wait till you try it. We’ll see who laughs. (Ha! My fuzzy dog is laughing at you already.)

I keep a drop of fresh rain in my hanky, so I can remember how it smells when it first bangs on the roof.

Math is Mother Nature’s nosey sister.

Snow is the Earth’s winter blanket, but when I get too cold, I just grow more hair.

Some days you’re a thoroughbred…someday you’re a donkey.

Some days you’re a sunflower: some days a zombie.

You don’t get cataracts from your cat, no matter what your dog tells you.
Holding a baby too long reminds me to change the cat box.

Me and Nature have an understanding; I don’t chop down trees and Her rabbits don’t eat my garden. Of course, everything in my garden tastes like chewing on a tree.

I think a fly circling my head is like a planet circling the sun.

I wanted to go down to the meadow, But found myself on the pasture rising.

I didn’t pick the flower…the flower picked me.

My cow doesn’t want to stay in the barn with the horse anymore. She wants a new ruminate. (Read it out loud and catch up.)
**Habits and Alibis**

It used to be TV ads were for cigarettes, cars or beer. Now, most new ads are about cancer, car insurance or alcoholic rehab centers. There’s a story in there somewhere.

How do I find my wits? Wits=kits. Kits=kittens  Kittens=mittens  Mittens are in the pocket of my coat.  Ah, there are my wits. Screwball in the side pocket.

The other day, I was hunting for my riding mower keys. I found the cat, and there were the keys. The keys are still exhausted from the cat’s paws. Luckily it wasn’t the computer mouse or I’d have to have emptied the cat box.

Purple hair is critical at a ripe age cause then the buzzards can’t tell if I’m just spoiled rotten or just ripe.

I went back to college in my senior years. I got a MSW. I’m a Mistress of Stupendous Wackiness.
I don’t go around draining other people’s swamps, unless I’m ready to ride their alligators.

When I get lost in thought I always end up back home…now and then, somebody else’s.

When your pants are so tight I can read your butt tattoo, then I can also tell what’s what and who’s who.

I’m often asked in this political turmoil, “What do you support?” I support hose.

I only shower after my dogs complain.

I only wash my dog when it complains about how bad I smell.

Ice headaches prove we can have pain in our brains without having to think about anything.

Don’t try to put lipstick on a pig…even if it’s wearing pantyhose.
Of course, I like my walkers…and Johnny is my favorite.

Cold bothers me at my age, so I don’t keep ice cubes near the liquor cabinet.

A real man owns up to his mistakes. A good woman forgives him for his mistakes. And then, if they’re lucky, they can shift places.

The stars and stripes—salute them with your heart.

I like tall people. They provide nice walking shade.

Luck (Lucy) has no interest in good or bad. Nor does luck have any connection to arithmetic.

If I get a smile out of you, that’s chocolate on my ice cream.

Yesterday I was riding the mower and swizzling a slurpy.

Got one of those screaming ice headaches behind my right eye. Not to worry. I have one good eye left.
Life without sparklies is a desert without sand.

Last night was cold so I brought the dog bed and cat bed inside. I put the beds next to the heater, side-by-side. I won’t go around that tree twice.

Nobody gets through childhood without some bruises. I chose talking to my dog. She always listened and then yawned.

Speaking of beds, I smooth my sheets and tuck them in real tight. If there is one wrinkle, I twitch all night. The problem is, sometimes the wrinkles are my own.

I have an old-fashioned kind of bed. It has four tall posts and I stack it high. I pile on two sets of box springs, three mattresses and then four blankets. I have to rest up before I climb that Everest; otherwise, I might spill my Old Fashioned on the way up.

When I am too stressed out, I sit in the porch swing and let the sun tickle my toes.
My ears were ringing for
no reason I could see;
but, then again, my ears
are not in front of me.

I can always find a reason
If I want to go
I can always find a way
If I want to stay

Sure I play Internet games. I like the ones where I match up three things that are alike. I was a whiz at that in kindergarten.

Moon was sneaking in my bedroom window, keeping me wide-awake. Even the moths in clothes closet were humming.
I never try to be something I’m not. That’s worse than wearing my teeth in
backwards.

When I feel a headache coming on I nail some ice cubes to my forehead. That’s so
distracting, I forget about the headache.

At night, when train horns echo through the hollows and hills, they give a body a
melancholy rest. Jet planes…not so much.

I wear my jeans till they wear me out.

I got a wakeup call, but it was the wrong number.

THREE THINGS TO DO TODAY

Laugh—at cats and kids bouncing off the couch.

Talk—with a stranger just like an old friend

Admire—myself. “Atta girl.” Pat myself on the back
Fuddy duddy, that’s what I say, when the storm clouds come but don’t leave a helpful rain.

On wash day I pour soapy water in my galoshes and squish around in them.

I disagree with myself quite often, but the good thing is no matter how it turns out, I’m always right.

Done a lot, seen a lot, won a few, lost plenty but I still lean towards the sunrise every day like the sun-struck daisies in my garden.

Births are noisy and bright. Deaths are deep shades of violet. Somewhere in between is like my hair…gray, frazzled and confused whenever I try to comb through it all to make some kind of order.
THREE THINGS TO DO THIS WEEK

Talk to the garden

Sniff around for a new smell

Find fresh sunshine to walk in

I have a particular way I like my doors…open…open…open.

I don’t let the dog lick my face, as I might be the second stop on its tongue train.
Shoot First Take Names Later

Why can’t we all just get a long…stick, and then do all our fighting with sticks.

Can’t tolerate flies in the bathroom. My weapon of choice? A roll of toilet paper. Not only does it wipe butt, it also kicks butt.

My neighbor really ticked me off. I was so mad I peed in the shower…but not mine.

I’d invite that to dinner but it might make the chicken get up off the table and run.

I like sweeping my porch and I’m not sorry you were on it.

That’s not a hairstyle…that’s a tall tree in a summer storm.

I can count my friends on one hand, and I use my other hand to gesture at my enemies.

I always put my best foot forward, once I’m sure who I’m stepping on.
Clueless means anyone…but not me.

Those who think the world ends at the tip of their nose…try a telescope.

If I can’t make an intelligent point—I just yell a lot.

Mouths do the talking. Butts do the walking. Pay close attention to which is which.

I always keep a chew bone treat in my pocket for politicians after they speak.

If someone irritates me, I just walk away. I call it Preparation W.

When people ask my opinion, I don’t give it. Frustrates the hell out of them.

There was an old woman who lived in a shoe. That right there tells you to pay no mind to anything else that old biddy does.

I keep a clean house. I chased a cobweb spider with a broom so long he finally turned around and asked to share my oxygen tank.

If someone comes in I don’t like, I have to decide: dog or broom? Broom or dog? Both?
Sometimes those pesky sales people call me late at night and try to rattle on…but so do I…and after a few minutes of listening to me shaking the baby rattle they hang up.

I used to work naked in the garden until my neighbor almost shot me. He thought I looked like a ‘possum.

People have been planning my burial for years…it will simply end in a failed plot.

Someone who was hanging by a rope, off a cliff, called my phone late at night. I helped by putting him on hold.

Put it in your ear. Spin it around. Get the wax of what you said and try telling the truth next time.

That goes out the door. You shouldn’t have brought it in…unless it was paying its own way and had a good-looking man looking for me.

Bite me…but don’t leave no marks cause then everyone can see what an old snaggle tooth you are.
My deafness sometimes garbles other folks’ words, which has probably kept me out of jail for assault.

Hack hack, give ‘em all a whack. till they don’t keep asking me to vote them idiots back.

I’ve lived most of my life on this farm so I know the land. It speaks to me. Right now it’s saying you better skedaddle off it.

The Fightin’ Grannies

Edna we call Granny Cat Scratch.
Her weapon of choice: her cat Duk.

Soup Warrior

Her weapon of choice: a giant soupspoon.

Sadie

Not quite a mountain, just a small hill of a woman. Weapon of choice…left foot

Mel

Pixie woman. Weapon of choice…cane

Me

--they call me Gristlebone because I gnaw on soup bones. Weapon of choice…wooden soupspoon.

**Money Don’t Matter Unless It’s Mine**

Sundays I watch football games all day and decide on which medical insurance to invest in on Monday.

A fool and his money? When was the last time you met a fool that ever had any?
I was watching the financial channel and heard an advisor say, “Blah, Blah, Blah.” The next will say, “Zippity Do Dah.” No two agree on what day it is, much less where to invest. My money plan is simple: buy a calf…wait…sell the cow.

More is always better.

My cousin Myron found a real luck penny once…it was in the bottom of a bag he took from a Brink’s truck.

My sister Wenda rescues horses, sheep, llamas, geese, hogs and dogs. She saves ducks in the bathtub, chicks in the laundry basket and a hurt turkey in the recliner. She’s so happy with her critters that she does the chicken dance…in the chicken coop.
Art of Love and a Broken Paint Brush

Warm fuzzies are found in small things; a kitten, a cookie, a hug.

A small tike road his small bike around at night.

He got into a small fight with neighbor Mike.

“Let’s make this right,” said neighbor Mike.

Each then put on a helmet light.

Around Mike’s yard they spun and twirled,

like polka dancing little girls.

Around the oak they spun till spent,

Until all of their spokes were bent.

With laughter roars, they joked in glee,

“I’ll never again go round that tree.”

Everyone can have it all. There is enough.
DAYS

MONDAYS

On Mondays my friend Monty and I share a pizza. We split it half and half. I get the bigger half.

TUESDAYS

I toodle around town on my riding mower.

WEDNESDAYS

On Wednesdays I wash my pet hog, Woller.

THURSDAYS

This is my day to quench my thirst with sweet tea.

FRIDAYS

On Fridays I eat ice cream with a fork just because on Thursdays.

SATURDAYS

I wash spoons

SUNDAYS

On Sundays I sweep everything and vacuum the dog.
Legal or Not It Might Be Worth Trying

Sure, I don’t make the same mistake twice, ‘cause there are so many other delightful ones still out there.

All those cop shows on TV! Who needs ‘em? I can just watch my neighbor’s house.

I have to use the glasses sometimes…not so much to read, but for a late night snort.

They can take away my driver’s license but I still got keys to the riding mower.

I like my birthday suit. I wear it all the time.

Lady bits are glorious. (I like my lady bits cause I’m sure which one to use.)

People ask, “Aren’t you a little old for running around naked?” I ask, “Aren’t you in the wrong house.”

Getting older is a process of elimination. Eliminating irritating bill collectors is the best step.
More Bless the Littles and Many Others

LADY BLESS OUR WARRIORS

LADY, BLESS OUR WARRIORS.

Some warriors wear green.
Some warriors wear blue.
Some warriors wear red,
And even white, too.

LADY, BLESS OUR WARRIORS.

Some warriors are called Kyle.
Some are called cop,
And some are called canine.

LADY, BLESS OUR WARRIORS.

Some are called Seal.
Some are called Marine,
And some are called Mom.
LADY, BLESS OUR HOMETOWN HEROES.

May each sunrise find them honored.
May each sunset find them safe.

LADY, BLESS OUR WARRIORS.

LADY BLESS THOSE WHO HELP

A puppy, hurt and abandoned,
Lies in the road.
People walk by
People walk by
One stops to take it home
Lady bless those who help

A child, hungry and cold,
Sits in an alley.
People walk by
People walk by
People walk by
One stops to take it to shelter
Lady bless those who help
A woman, bruised and shaking,
Hides at a bus stop
People walk by
People walk by
One stops to offer guide to safe haven
Lady bless those who help

People walk by
People walk by
When hope is needed most
One stops to help them all
Lady bless those who help