



The Wisdom of Age. Image by [silviarita](#) from and licensed by [Pixabay](#)

“I’ll still arise”¹

In previous weeks we have touched on wisdom, and I cited a quotation from the writer, activist, poet and wisdom woman Maya Angelou (1928-2014). I have found her writings to be a good antidote to pessimism.

This week I set out below a selection from her wit.² Treat them as if you are dining out on tapas, savour the flavour of each dish, and see if any settle on or in you!

“Prejudice is a burden which confuses the past, threatens the future, and renders the present inaccessible.”

“Unfortunately, fortitude was not like the colour of my skin, given to me once and mine forever. It needed to be resurrected each morning and exercised painstakingly. It also had to be fed with at least a few triumphs.”

“We are not our brothers’ keeper; we *are* our brother and we *are* our sister. We must look past complexion and see community.”

“A conversation between friends can sound as melodic as a scripted song.”

“I am grateful that love exists: familial love (love between relatives), romantic love (a passion between lovers), agape love (divine love between God and friends), love of nature (the majesty of mountains, the lasting love of oceans), and the joy of laughter. We are stronger, kinder, and more generous because we live in an atmosphere where love exists.”

“I try to plant peace if I do not want discord; to plant loyalty and honesty if I want to avoid betrayal and lies.”

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”

“Only poets care about what happened to the snows of yesteryear.”

“Continue to plant a kiss of concern on the cheek of the sick and the aged and infirm and count that action as natural and to be expected.”

“Forgiveness is the greatest gift you can give yourself.”

“I learned that I could be a giver by simply bringing a smile to another person.”

“I think we must surrender the despair of unexpected cruelties and extend the wonder of unexpected kindnesses to ourselves and to each other... We deserve each other and each other’s generosity.”

“Let the brain go to work, letting it meet the heart, and you will be able to forgive.”

“Let gratitude be the pillow upon which you kneel to say your nightly prayer. And let faith be the bridge you build to overcome evil and welcome good.”

“The quality of strength lined with tenderness is an unbeatable combination.”

“It is said that courage is the most important of all the virtues, because without courage you can’t practise any other virtue with consistency.”

“There is no failure as long as you learn from your experience, continue to work, and continue to press on for success.”

“A person’s speech is a mirror to his or her soul.”

“Bitterness is like cancer. It eats upon the host.”

“Some decide that happiness and glee are the same thing, they are not. When we choose happiness we accept the responsibility to lighten the load of someone else and to be a light on the path of another who may be walking in darkness.”

“Remember your own shortcomings, and when you encounter another with flaws, don’t be eager to righteously seal yourself away from the offender forever. Take a few breaths and imagine yourself having just committed the action which has set you at odds.”

“Those who would use ridicule as a form of humour, sow nothing but shame and bitterness and when the snide laughter ends, they will reap only anger and hostility.”

“Tragedy, no matter how sad, becomes boring to those not caught in its addictive caress.”

“You may not control all the events that happened to you, but you can decide not to be reduced by them.”

“Coming events will affect me, however my prayer and determination are that they will not reduce me.”

“You have been paid for. Each of you, Black, White, Brown, Yellow, Red - whatever pigment you use to describe yourselves - has been paid for. But for the sacrifices made by some of your ancestors, you would not be here; they have paid for you. So, when you enter a challenging situation, bring them on the stage with you; let their distant voices add timbre and strength to your words. For it is your job to pay for those who are yet to come.”

“We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty.”

“When old folks laugh, they free the world.”

Feel free to share which of these, if any, speak to you, and why?

Love and blessings, David

Chichester Anna Chaplaincy





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¹ “Shoot me with your words. Cut with your eyes. Kill me with your hatefulness But still, like air, I’ll rise!”

² Angelou, M. (2014) *Rainbow in the Cloud: The Wit and Wisdom of Maya Angelou*. London, UK. Virago