

“At best, it would appear, happiness can only be glimpsed out of the corner of an eye, not stared at directly. ... The effort to try to feel happy is often precisely the thing that makes us miserable.”

“Learn how to stop trying to fix things, to stop being so preoccupied with trying to control one’s experience of the world, to give up trying to replace unpleasant thoughts and emotions with more pleasant ones, and to see that, through dropping the ‘pursuit of happiness’, a more profound peace might result.”

“What motivates our investment in goals and planning for the future, much of the time, isn’t any sober recognition of the virtues of preparation and looking ahead. Rather, it’s something much more emotional: how deeply uncomfortable we are made by feelings of uncertainty. Faced with the anxiety of not knowing what the future holds, we invest ever more fiercely in our preferred vision of that future – not because it will help us achieve it, but because it helps rid us of feelings of uncertainty in the present.”

“You should sun yourself on a lily-pad until you get bored; then, when the time is right, you should jump to a new lily-pad and hang out there for a while. Continue this over and over, moving in whatever direction feels right.”

‘A good traveller has no fixed plans and is not intent upon arriving.’ — Lao Tzu

“The ‘cult of optimism’ is all about looking forward to a happy or successful future, thereby reinforcing the message that happiness belongs to some other time than now.”