



*The lips of the wise are as the doors of a cabinet; no sooner are they opened, but the treasures are poured before you. Like unto trees of gold arranged in beds of silver, are wise sentences uttered in due season.*

*~ Khemetic Saying ~*

*The words that enlighten the soul are more precious than jewels.*  
~ Hazrat Khan ~

# WISDOM *for the Soul*

FIVE MILLENNIA  
OF PRESCRIPTIONS  
FOR SPIRITUAL HEALING

*Compiled & Edited by*  
*Larry Chang*

*You have come here to find what you already have.*  
~ Buddhist aphorism ~

  
GNOSOPHIA  
WASHINGTON

## *Wisdom for the Soul:*

### FIVE MILLENNIA OF PRESCRIPTIONS FOR SPIRITUAL HEALING

Copyright © 2006 by Laurence Chang

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or manual, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the author, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in critical articles or reviews.

Published by:

Gnosophia Publishers

P O Box 3183

Washington, DC 20010-0183

USA

<http://www.wisdomforthesoul.org>

[orders@wisdomforthesoul.org](mailto:orders@wisdomforthesoul.org)

#### **Publisher's Cataloging-in-Publication**

Wisdom for the soul : five millennia of prescriptions for  
spiritual healing / compiled & edited by Larry Chang. –

1st ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

LCCN 2005933148

ISBN 0-9773391-0-6

1. Self-realization--Quotations, maxims, etc.
2. Spiritual life--Quotations, maxims, etc. I. Chang, Larry.

PN6084.S45W57 2006

158.1

QBI05-600159

First printing 2006

Printed in USA

## *Acknowledgments*

Much appreciation to Michael Davidson and Eddie Maddox of Decatur, Georgia; Sammie Nicely of Atlanta, Georgia; Charmaine Limonius and Txema Beato of Manhattan, New York, and Kingston, Jamaica; and Carl Neita and Namon Armstrong of Washington, DC, for opening their hearts and homes to me in my time of need, and with that, access to their personal libraries from which much of the material herein was drawn. And to John Evelyn Scott who took care of business while I wandered off doing this work; to Lisa Moore for her editorial assistance and proofreading; and Jessica Jones who encouraged me along the way.



*Be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.*  
~ Edith Wharton ~

## GUIDE TO USAGE

NAMES : For the most part, authors are referred to in the text by the names they are most widely known, with birth and/or other names listed in the index. For example, Juan de Ypes is shown as John of the Cross, and indexed as such. Chinese and Japanese names adhere to their order of family name first, then given name, throughout. Romanization of Chinese names follows the pinyin system.

### ABBREVIATIONS USED:

b.	born
BCE	Before the Common Era
c.	circa (about)
C.	Century
CE	Common Era
d.	died
fl.	flourished
Ibid.	from the same source
ed(s).	editor(s)
tr(s).	translator(s)



## *Contents*

Acknowledgments	5
Guide to Usage	6
Disclaimer	8
Introduction	9
Table of Subjects	17
Biographical Index	771
About the Author	819

*Give your ears, hear the sayings,  
Give your heart to understand them;  
It profits to put them in your heart.  
~ Amenemope ~*

## *Disclaimer*

This book is designed to provide access to utterances and expressions of opinion that may enlighten and inform.

While the reader may derive comfort and relief from their perusal, it is not intended to replace consultation with the appropriate professionals for medical conditions.



*'Tis the good reader that makes the good  
book; a good head cannot read amiss: in  
every book he finds passages which seem  
confidences or asides hidden from all else  
and unmistakably meant for his ear.*

*~ Ralph Waldo Emerson ~*



## *Introduction*

Another book of quotations? Indeed there are numerous excellent extant anthologies of quotations, but these tend to be very broad, with a bias toward classical and well-known authors. This anthology focuses on the inner life, on personal development and self-actualization. The quotations have been selected to inspire, enlighten and encourage, and they have been arranged by category and by author in chronological order. The resulting timeline of thought in itself is useful and instructive as it demonstrates very clearly the evolution of consciousness evident in the contemporary thinking on particular subjects. One or more quotations in each classification will be sure to strike a responsive chord in the reader.

Better than a thousand sayings composed of meaningless statements is a single meaningful statement on hearing which one becomes calm.

~ Buddha, c. 563-483 BCE ~  
*The Dhammapada*, Thomas Cleary, tr., 1994

The words that enlighten the soul are more precious than jewels.

~ Hazrat Khan, 1882-1927 ~

In the stress of modern life, we seek solutions, or at least some insight from whatever quarter, that may relate or throw light on the challenges we may be facing. We can take some small comfort in realizing that there is no need to reinvent the wheel.

Employ your time in improving yourself by other men's writings, so that you shall gain easily what others have labored hard for.

~ Socrates, 469-399 BCE ~

We have a legacy of recorded thought spanning some five millennia in various world cultures that addresses every conceivable condition that has faced the individual. Somebody somewhere has probably been there, done that already. We can refer to what they have thought and said of the experience, and we can learn from them. There is something here for everyone.

The Logos is digging a channel for water to reach the next generation.  
 During every generation there is one who brings the word of God;  
 Still the sayings of those who have come before are helpful.

~ Jalaluddin Rumi, 1207-1273 ~  
*Mathnawi III*, 2537-2538  
*The Pocket Rumi Reader*, Kabir Helminski, ed.

All truly wise thoughts have been thought already thousands of times; but to make them truly ours, we must think them over again honestly, till they take root in our personal experience.

~ Johann von Goethe, 1749-1832 ~

The wisdom of the wise and the experience of the ages are perpetuated by quotations.

~ Benjamin Disraeli, 1804-1881 ~

## INTRODUCTION 10

Like many before me, I have been a compulsive collector of quotations for years and sought a convenient way in which to organize them for ready reference for my own use. As a counselor, I offered them as suggestions for clients to clarify particular issues before them. I more often than not found that someone had already expressed so cogently and concisely, and oftentimes poetically, the precise intangible I struggled to describe.

All of us encounter, at least once in our life, some individual who utters words that make us think forever. There are men whose phrases are oracles; who can condense in one sentence the secrets of life; who blurt out an aphorism that forms a character, or illustrates an existence.

~ Disraeli ~

I love quotations because it is a joy to find thoughts one might have, beautifully expressed with much authority by someone recognized wiser than oneself.

~ Marlene Dietrich, 1901-1992 ~

It became so I had difficulty in conducting meaningful exchanges without peppering them, perhaps unbearably pedagogically at times, with references to what someone else had said. I am at my most pedantic in e-mail correspondence where I have fingertip access to the files on my hard drive. In this way, my own inadequacies of thought and expression are camouflaged and compensated for, creating the spurious impression of great erudition.

I quote others only the better to express myself.

~ Michel de Montaigne, 1533-1592 ~

I always have a quotation for everything – it saves original thinking.

~ Dorothy Sayers, 1893-1957 ~

*Have His Carcass*

Next to being witty yourself, the best thing is being able to quote another's wit.

~ Christian Nestell Bovee, 1820-1904 ~

*Thoughts, Feelings and Fancies*, 1857

If I quote liberally, it is not to show off book learning, which at my stage of life can only invite ridicule, but rather to bathe in this kinship of strangers.

~ Tuan Yi-Fu, 1930- ~

*Who Am I? An Autobiography of Emotion, Mind, and Spirit*, 1999

Due to faulty memory or sluggish synapses, however, I tended to mangle even well-known and noble utterances. This collection is as much for my own convenience, and delectation, as for anyone else's, to save me untold embarrassment. As the exercise of handling these quotations was in itself an occasion of learning and a revelation, contributing greatly to filling conspicuously rudimentary gaps in my literary education, I cannot lay claim to Pearson's vindication:

Misquotation is the pride and privilege of the learned. A widely read man never quotes accurately, for the obvious reason that he has read too widely.

~ Edward Hesketh Gibbons Pearson, 1887-1964 ~

Introduction, *Common Misquotations*, 1937

While I would not expect the reader to indulge me in misquoting within these pages, stranger things have been known to happen. Like in the children's game of telephone, I am merely repeating what someone repeated of what someone else said. If my sources got it wrong somehow, or incorrect attributions appear, then I apologize ahead of time. If inaccuracies are brought to my attention, corrections will be made in future editions. Likewise, I will readily surrender any of the lines for

## INTRODUCTION | I

which I claim authorship, not necessarily because I never originated them but in deference to earlier, more illustrious sources.

I often quote myself; it adds spice to my conversation.

~ George Bernard Shaw, 1856-1950 ~

in *Reader's Digest*, 1943

One-line biographies of the authors, and citations of sources, are included where possible. Readers' curiosity may be aroused to delve further into the life and work of the authors. Their inclusion here may act as an introduction, a doorway to infinite universes of thought and delight.

It is a good thing for an uneducated man to read books of quotations. The quotations, when engraved upon the memory, give you good thoughts. They also make you anxious to read the authors and look for more.

~ Winston Churchill, 1874-1965 ~

My *Early Life*, 1930

I cannot better outline and describe the process of making this collection than by quoting (what else?) someone else:

One could say of me that in this book I have only made up a bunch of other men's flowers, providing of my own only the string to tie them together.

~ Montaigne ~

The string I have provided, homespun and rough-drawn though it may be, differs from the selective criteria of most traditional collections in that it eschews and omits expressions of unhelpful criticism, carping and cynicism, however trenchant and witty. It is intended to parcel together related themes for the purpose of self-analysis, elucidation and empowerment. Its preponderant worldview reflects the perennial philosophy and accepts a reality of our own creation, our experience of it based on our prevailing attitude. This attitude is infinitely malleable and subject to our control, hence it is the basis of our empowerment.

There is an inordinate amount of material available, and I have been through a great deal of it – still only scratching the surface – filtering for negativity and unhelpfulness. Many were called but relatively few were chosen. Of what remained, only those quotations characterized by clarity of thought, lyricism or sonority, or possessed of that distinctive authoritative ring, were selected for inclusion. All spoke directly to me, some albeit in a whisper, but they are all imbued with a high degree of authenticity.

A man will turn over half a library to make one book.

~ Samuel Johnson, 1709-1784 ~

In the same way that we sometimes hunger for, nay, crave, a particularly well-prepared dish, so we have a need to feast on choice selections of words and well-turned phrases that our souls may be nourished.

A quotation at the right moment is like bread in a famine.

~ *Talmud*, 2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> C. CE ~

Some quotations will be found to fit as easily in one category as another, and the reader may very well question their assignment. To mitigate this somewhat, cross-indexing is provided but ultimately the choices were based on my own subjective responses for which I take full responsibility. Another studied departure is the inclusion of quotations from less familiar sources, tending to encompass, more than heretofore, thinkers and writers of non-western cultures, of people of color, from the

## INTRODUCTION 12

earliest recorded Khemetic civilization to the present time. Creating a forum for unfamiliar and seldom heard voices makes it a more inclusive, more global representation.

Voices previously drowned out ... can have special meaning in the struggle to eradicate inequality.

~ Allan Hutchinson ~

Despite this intention, however, the preponderance of Western authors is not surprising given the limitations and a priori bias of selecting from available writings in English. In some instances, quotations have been rendered as well in their original languages.

All men are interdependent. Every nation is an heir of a vast treasury of ideas and labor to which both the living and the dead of all nations have contributed. Whether we realize it or not, each of us lives eternally "in the red." We are everlasting debtors to known and unknown men and women.

~ Martin Luther King, Jr., 1929-1968 ~

*The Words of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, Coretta Scott King, ed., 1983

What began as a *divertissement* soon took over to become an obsession with no apparent end in sight. I am still discovering words of wisdom; new profundities are being uttered every day. Perhaps I have inadvertently stumbled upon the ultimate perpetual motion machine, as future editions of indeterminate number will have to reflect and include latterly revealed and newly minted expressions of wisdom. The criteria for selection will evolve and the categories themselves will tend to proliferate as hitherto undefined distinctions of psycho-spiritual subtleties become established.

The majority of those who put together collections of verses or epigrams resemble those who eat cherries or oysters: they begin by choosing the best and end by eating everything.

~ Sébastien Chamfort, 1741-1794 ~

There are a number of ways this anthology can be used. The first and most obvious is as a reference to many of the world's great quotations, providing quick access to part of humanity's greatest legacy: recorded thought. They are cross-referenced and indexed by subject and author.

The lips of the wise are as the doors of a cabinet; no sooner are they opened, but the treasures are poured before you. Like unto trees of gold arranged in beds of silver, are wise sentences uttered in due season.

~ Khemetic Saying ~

*Temt Tchaas: Egyptian Proverbs*, Muata Ashaya Ashby, ed., 1994

The teachings of elegant sayings

Should be collected when one can.

For the supreme gift of words of wisdom,

Any price will be paid.

~ Nagarjuna, fl. c. 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> C. CE ~

The wisdom of the wise and the experience of the ages is preserved, into perpetuity, by a nation's proverbs, fables, folk wisdom, maxims, aphorisms and quotations.

~ William Feather, 1889-1981 ~

The art of thinking is practiced by all of us with greater or lesser facility. Language is the medium in which we think. There is much we can learn from the words selected by others, how they combined them and the effect they have on us. In this way, we refine and clarify our own thinking process.

## INTRODUCTION 13

When ideas fail, words come in very handy.  
~ Johann von Goethe, 1749-1832 ~

If we have a need to communicate the results of this process to another human being, we need to be able to express what we think in a way that convinces them of what we think. Reference to what has been said before is often an effective way to do this, for the recipient commonly shares in the same literary legacy.

An apt quotation is like a lamp which flings its light over the whole sentence.  
~ L. E. Landon ~  
*Romance and Reality*, 1848

A quotation in a speech, article or book is like a rifle in the hands of an infantryman. It speaks with authority.  
~ Brendan Francis ~

Researchers, speakers and writers will find much to mine here, but everyone, regardless of station or calling, likes to relate to what others have said and quote whatever amplifies or supports our thinking. It adds another dimension, gives validity and increases the legitimacy of what we say if we are able to allude, however obliquely, to some prior well-turned, but hopefully not well-worn, utterance.

A book that furnishes no quotations is, *me judice*, no book – it is a plaything.  
~ Caroline Ponsonby Lamb, 1785-1828 ~  
*Crochet Castle*

I hate quotations. Tell me what you know.  
~ Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803-1882 ~  
*Journals of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 1863

By necessity, by proclivity – and by delight, we all quote.  
~ Emerson ~

All minds quote. Old and new make the warp and woof of every moment. There is no thread that is not a twist of these two strands ... The highest statement of new philosophy complacently caps itself with some prophetic maxim from the oldest learning.  
~ Emerson ~

The second way to utilize *Wisdom for the Soul* is as a field guide to varying experiences and states of mind. It can be both diagnostic and prescriptive, allowing us to identify and better understand the ineffable human spirit, to self-treat whatever sense of dissatisfaction or dis-ease may come upon us; it may suggest a regimen to follow or an antidote to apply. If Anger is our current challenge, we may wish to assess how others have dealt with their own, and then be directed to consider the remedies of Acceptance, Composure, Equanimity or Forgiveness. Cross-references to therapeutic elements to restore or enhance spiritual tone are listed as Syntonic, while toxic or injurious elements as classed as Dystonic.<sup>1</sup> Each quotation may be regarded as a mind pattern for the replication of neuropeptides, those amino acids produced by the body and that control the emotions and immune system.

---

<sup>1</sup> Neuropeptides provide the physiological basis for the emotions ... The striking pattern of neuropeptide receptor distribution in mood-regulating areas of the brain, as well as their role in mediating communication through the whole organism, makes neuropeptides the obvious candidates for the biochemical mediation of emotion. It may be too that each neuropeptide biases information processing uniquely when occupying receptors at nodal points with the brain and body. If so, then each neuropeptide may evoke a unique "tone" that is equivalent to a mood state.

- Candace Pert, "Neuropeptides: The Emotions and Bodymind," in *Noetic Sciences Review*, No.2, Spring 1987

## INTRODUCTION 14

This messenger molecule (neuropeptide) and cell-receptor communication system is the psychological basis of mindbody healing, therapeutic hypnosis, and holistic medicine in general.

~ Ernest Rossi ~

*The Psychobiology of Mind-Body Healing*

Let the buyer beware, however:

Almost every wise saying has an opposite one, no less wise, to balance it.

~ George Santayana, 1863-1952 ~

A cursory consultation may leave the reader questioning or confused. The sections on Questioning and Uncertainty could prove helpful here or may lead the reader from Conflict and Struggle through Acceptance of Change and Paradox to a Decision or Solution arrived at with Determination while maintaining the Integrity of Self.

As with holistic therapies, we will discover that we may have to treat the whole person rather than deal with isolated symptoms. Resonating with ideas from different classifications, we make out our own prescriptions, individually and specifically suited to our condition and temperament. Ultimately, we each have to listen to our own inner voice, follow our own innate wisdom, but in this we can be guided and reminded by the voices of prophets and ordinary folk alike.

All verbal teachings are just to cure diseases. Because diseases are not the same, the remedies are also different ... True words are those that actually cure sickness; if the cure manages to heal, then all are true words. If they can't effectively cure sickness, all are false words. True words are false words when they give rise to views. False words are true words when they cut off the delusions of sentient beings. Because disease is unreal, there is only unreal medicine to cure it.

~ Baizhang Huaihai, 749-814 ~

It will do no good, however, to arrive at the most accurate and percipient diagnosis and to prescribe the most efficacious remedy, if we do not apply it. Some change of thought and behavior has to be initiated. As with everything else, the more we put into it is the more we will get out of it.

Nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced – even a Proverb is no proverb to you till your Life has illustrated it.

~ John Keats, 1795-1821 ~

Letter to George and Georgiana Keats, 1819 March 19

Proverbs are always platitudes until you have personally experienced the truth of them.

~ Aldous Huxley, 1894-1963 ~

*Jesting Pilate*

No matter how full a reservoir of *maxims* one may possess, and no matter how good one's *sentiments* may be, if one has not taken advantage of every opportunity to *act*, one's character may remain entirely unaffected for the better.

~ William James, 1842-1910 ~

The third way that I would suggest for the reader to use this book is as a guide to contemplation and meditation. As with other inspirational texts, a selection could be chosen each day, at random or in any order, and used as a focus of attention. No particular religion, belief system or practice is required or is here being recommended. Care has been taken to avoid quotations that favor any

## INTRODUCTION 15

particular religious tradition over any other. In keeping with the self-empowering focus of the collection, deistic, transcendent and devotional readings have been excluded.

The only way to read a book of aphorisms without being bored is to open it at random and, having found something that interests you, close the book and meditate.

~ Prince Charles-Joseph de Ligne, 1735-1814 ~

*Mélanges militaires, littéraires et sentimentales, 1795-1811*

The random selection of a quotation from the collection by each member of a workshop or focus group could become a means of introduction, an icebreaker, as that member shares with the rest of the group what that quotation means to her or him, and how it relates to them personally – a wisdom circle, if you will. In this way, encapsulated wisdom becomes disseminated, amplified and experienced in application.

It is my fervent hope that readers will derive as much enlightenment and enjoyment out of this anthology as I have had in compiling it. I trust that it will be found to reflect more closely, not Chesterton's, but rather Evans' observation:

You could compile the worst book in the world entirely out of selected passages from the best writers in the world.

~ G. K. Chesterton, 1874-1936 ~

Wisdom is meaningless until your own experience has given it meaning ... and there is wisdom in the selection of wisdom.

~ Bergen Evans, 1904-1978 ~

If nothing else, sit back and enjoy. I've had so much enrichment – and fun. I hope you do too.

Like your body your mind also gets tired so refresh it by wise sayings.

~ Hazrat Ali, 599-661 ~

in *Peak of Eloquence - Nahjul Balagha: Sermons and Letters of Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib*, Sayed Ali Reza, tr., 1984

One of the joys of reading is the ability to plug into the shared wisdom of mankind.

~ Ishmael Reed, 1938- ~

After all,

Life itself is a quotation ...

~ Jorge Luis Borges, 1899-1986 ~

in Jean Baudrillard, *Cool Memories*, 1987

*All truly wise thoughts have  
been thought already  
thousands of times; but to  
make them truly ours, we must  
think them over again  
honestly, till they take root in  
our personal experience.  
~ Johann von Goethe ~*