

FAVORITE QUOTES

Give Smart

We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.

– Winston Churchill

No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.

– Charles Dickens

The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have too much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.

– Franklin D. Roosevelt

It takes a noble person to plant a seed for a tree that will one day provide shade to those whom he may never meet.

– Unknown

It is more difficult to give money away intelligently than to earn it in the first place.

– Andrew Carnegie

It is every man's obligation to put back into the world at least the equivalent of what he takes out of it.

– Albert Einstein

Success cannot be measured solely—or even primarily—in monetary terms, nor in terms of the amount of power one may exercise over others, nor in the illusory fame of inevitable transitory public notice. But, it can be measured in our contributions to building a better world, in helping our fellow man, and in raising children who themselves become loving human beings and good citizens. Success, in short, can be measured not in what we attain for ourselves, but in what we contribute to our society.

—Jack Bogle

Failing, Not

It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all.

– J.K. Rowling

I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.

– Michael Jordan

It is not the critic who counts: not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the area, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who errs and comes up short again and again, because there is no effort without error or shortcoming, but who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotions, who spends himself for a worthy cause; who, at the best, knows, in the end, the triumph of high achievement. And who at the worst, if he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who knew neither victory nor defeat.

– Theodore Roosevelt

Finding Happiness

I, not events, have the power to make me happy or unhappy today. I can choose which it shall be. Yesterday is dead, tomorrow hasn't arrived yet. I have just one day, today, and I'm going to be happy in it.

– Groucho Marx

It depends on what you mean by financial freedom. If financial freedom is viewed as the freedom to buy anything you want and to sit around relaxing, you've set yourself up for an unsatisfying life. If financial freedom is defined as the freedom to spend your days doing what you're passionate about, you're likely to be far happier.

– Jonathan Clements

Happiness; we don't know what it means, how to measure it, or how to reach it, but we know extremely well how to avoid unhappiness.

– Taleb

History Lessons

Facts alone are never enough. Facts rarely if ever have any soul. In writing or trying to understand history one may have all manner of “data” and miss the truth. It can be like the old piano teacher’s lament to her student, ‘I hear all the notes, but I hear no music.

– David McCullough

In every age ‘the good old days’ were a myth. No one ever thought they were good at the time. For every age has consisted of crises that seemed intolerable to the people who lived through them.

– Brooks Atkinson

Human nature will not change. In any future great national trial, compared with the men of this, we shall have as weak and as strong, as silly and as wise, as bad and as good. Let us therefore study the incidents in this as philosophy to learn wisdom from and none of them as wrongs to be avenged.

– Abraham Lincoln

Your Brain on Money

Investing should be more like watching paint dry or watching grass grow. If you want excitement, take \$800 and go to Las Vegas.

– Paul Samuelson

To invest successfully over a lifetime does not require a stratospheric IQ, unusual business insights, or inside information. What’s needed is a sound intellectual framework for making decisions and the ability to keep emotions from corroding that framework.

– Jason Zweig

It’s hard to believe that you need a license to go fishing but can buy triple inverse ETFs on your own free will.

–Anonymous

They think intelligence is about noticing things that are relevant (detecting patterns); in a complex world, intelligence consists in ignoring things that are irrelevant (avoiding false patterns).

– Taleb

The stock market is filled with individuals who know the price of everything, but the value of nothing.

– Phillip Fisher

There’s a big difference between probability and outcome. Probable things fail to happen, and improbable things happen all the time. That’s one of the most important things you can know about investment risk.

– Howard Marks

Now is always the hardest time to invest.

– Bernard Baruch

We have no control over outcomes, but we can control the process. Of course, outcomes matter, but by focusing our attention on process we maximize our chances of good outcomes.

– Michael Mauboussin

It has been said that man is a rational animal. All my life I have been searching for evidence which could support this.

– Bertrand Russell

The dice have no memory. The coin can't recall the last toss. And the stock market doesn't care about your investment history.

– Jonathan Clements

The market can stay irrational longer than you can stay solvent.

– John Maynard Keynes

Nothing defines humans better than their willingness to do irrational things in the pursuit of phenomenally unlikely payoffs.

– Scott Adams

Even the most analytical thinkers are predictably irrational; the really smart ones acknowledge and address their irrationalities.

– Dan Ariely

Markets are irrational, and our backward-looking, patter-seeking lizard brains push us to lose money. Investors who let the lizard brain make financial decisions tend to buy at market tops and sell at market lows. Because our instincts are exactly out of sync with financial opportunity, markets can be mean. However, it is the very irrationality of markets that provides the opportunities to make sweet profits. Financial success is based on using emotional intelligence to shackle the lizard brain. Fortunately EQ can be increased by diligence, introspection, and discipline. Therefore, any investor willing to work to understand and tame the lizard brain can transform mean markets into money and satisfaction.

–Terry Burnham

Past, Present and Now

... the meeting of two eternities, the past and future... is precisely the present moment.

– Henry David Thoreau

It's being here now that's important. There's no past and there's no future. Time is a very misleading thing. All there is ever, is the now. We can gain experience from the past, but we can't relive it; and we can hope for the future, but we don't know if there is one.

— George Harrison

Experience is what you got when you didn't get what you wanted.

– Howard Marks

Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.

— John F. Kennedy

Remember then: there is only one time that is important—Now! It is the most important time because it is the only time when we have any power.

– Leo Tolstoy

The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.

— L.P. Hartley

All that is important is this one moment in movement. Make the moment important, vital, and worth living. Do not let it slip away unnoticed and unused.

— Martha Graham

I have realized that the past and future are real illusions, that they exist in the present, which is what there is and all there is.

– Alan Watts

Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.

— Søren Kierkegaard

You spend your whole life stuck in the labyrinth, thinking about how you'll escape one day, and how awesome it will be, and imagining that future keeps you going, but you never do it. You just use the future to escape the present.

— John Green

To Grit with Grace

Whether you think you can, or you think you can't – you're right.

– Henry Ford

I hated every minute of training, but I said, 'Don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion.'

— Muhammad Ali

The best way out is always through

–Robert Frost, Poet.

In our interior experience as individuals, as in the public forum of our shared experience as a culture, our courage lives in the same room as our fear--it is in troubled times, in despairing times, that we find out who we are and what we are capable of.

–Maria Popova

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.

– H. Jackson Brown's Mother

Uncertainty is the Thing

To trace something unknown back to something known is alleviating, soothing, gratifying and gives moreover a feeling of power. Danger, disquiet, anxiety attend the unknown - the first instinct is to eliminate these distressing states. First principle: any explanation is better than none... The cause-creating drive is thus conditioned and excited by the feeling of fear...

–Friedrich Nietzsche

CERTAINTY, *n.* A state of clarity and predictability in economic and geopolitical affairs that all investors say is indispensable — even though it doesn't exist, never has, and never will.

–Jason Zweig

All successful investing is a battle between one's need for certainty and one's tolerance for ambiguity. The emotional capacity to function under uncertainty is both the key to capturing equity returns and a critical test of one's emotional maturity. The more certainty you need, the more you'll allocate your portfolio towards bonds, and the lower your lifetime total return will be. The more ambiguity you can tolerate, the more you'll trust your fortune to equities—even, and especially, when you have no idea why they're doing what they're doing—and the higher your lifetime return will be.

—Nick Murray

...**Y**ou realize that the tail-end consequences—the low-probability, high-impact events—are all that matter. In investing, the average consequences of risk make up most of the daily news headlines. But the tail-end consequences of risk—like pandemics, and depressions—are what make the pages of history books. They're really all that matter. They're all you should focus on. We spent the last decade debating whether economic risk meant the Federal Reserve set interest rates at 0.25% or 0.5%. Then 36 million people lost their jobs in two months because of a virus. It's absurd.

Tail-end events are all that matter.

—Morgan Housel

What does Greece mean to you? "To trace something unknown back to something known is alleviating, soothing, gratifying and gives moreover a feeling of power. Danger, disquiet, anxiety attend the unknown - the first instinct is to eliminate these distressing states. First principle: any explanation is better than none... The cause-creating drive is thus conditioned and excited by the feeling of fear..." Friedrich Nietzsche "Any explanation is better than none." And the simpler, it seems in the investment game, the better. "The markets went up because oil went down," we are told, except when it went up there was another reason for the movement of the markets. We all intuitively know that things are far more complicated than that. But as Nietzsche noted, dealing with the unknown can be disturbing, so we look for the simple explanation. "Ah," we tell ourselves, "I know why that happened." With an explanation firmly in hand, we now feel we know something. And the behavioral psychologists note that this state actually releases chemicals in our brains that make us feel good. We become literally addicted to the simple explanation. The fact that what we "know" (the explanation for the unknowable) is irrelevant or even wrong is not important to the chemical release. And thus we look for reasons.

—John Maudlin