

EIGHTEEN TRUTHS

This is your journey, and yours alone. Others may walk it with you, but no one can walk it for you. Here are 18 truths to inspire, motivate and remind you that you aren't confined by the boundaries others impose on you. You are in full control of your own life, starting today.

1. **I can only be me.** – Stop trying to be someone else's idea of perfect. Be your imperfectly perfect self. Be YOU. When they laugh at you for being different, laugh back at them for being the same. Judy Garland once said, "Always be a first rate version of yourself instead of a second rate version of somebody else." Live by this statement. There is no such thing as living in someone else's shoes. The only shoes you can occupy are your own. If you aren't being yourself, you aren't [truly living](#) – you're merely existing.
2. **This is my life, and my dreams are worth it.** – Life is a courageous journey or nothing at all. We cannot become who we want to be by continuing to do exactly what we've been doing. If you are passionate about something, pursue it, no matter what anyone else thinks. That's how dreams are achieved. Be deaf when people tell you that you can't fulfill your dreams. The only place where your goals and dreams are impossible is inside your head. Once you've dreamed of it, you're halfway there. So go ahead and follow through. Let your dreams be bigger than your fears and your actions louder than your words. Follow your heart regardless of what others tell you to do. At the end of the day it's you who has to live with your decisions, not them. Read [The Road Less Traveled](#).
3. **Everything, good or bad, is a life lesson.** – Everyone you meet, everything you encounter, etc. – they're all part of the learning experience we call 'life.' Never forget to acknowledge the lesson, especially when things don't go your way. If you don't get a job that you wanted or a relationship doesn't work, it only means something better is out there waiting. And the lesson you just learned is the first step towards it. Remember, there are no mistakes, only lessons. Love yourself, trust your choices, remember what you deserve, and keep pushing forward.
4. **A few REAL friends are all I need.** – When it comes to relationships, focus on quality over quantity. Spend your time with friends who love and appreciate you, and who encourage you to improve in healthy and exciting ways. They are the ones who make you feel more alive, and not only embrace who you are now, but also embrace and embody who you want to be, unconditionally. Spend more time with those who make you smile and less time with those who you feel pressured to impress. These people make your day a little bit brighter simply by being in it. It is better to have one true friend than all the acquaintances in the world.
5. **My actions and words directly affect the lives around me.** – Lead by example. Practice what you preach or don't preach at all. Walk the talk! People watch what you do more than they listen to what you say. Inspire, challenge and encourage people to their best, by doing YOUR best. And when someone else is doing a great job, tell them that you're proud of them. Encourage them. Take the time to recognize their effort. If they know you believe they can do great things, they will often go to great lengths to live up to your expectations. Become the most positive and enthusiastic person you know. Optimism is a happiness magnet. If you stay positive and confident, good things and good people will be drawn to you.
6. **Broken promises destroy relationships.** – You make commitments to others and yourself all the time. The question is: Do you keep them? If you said you're going to do something, do it! When you fail to keep a promise, it tells others that you don't value their time or relationship. Don't over-promise; under-promise and over-deliver on everything you do. And a few words to the wise: Never make a big decision when you're angry, and never make a big promise when you're overjoyed.
7. **The little things are often the big things.** – Keep it simple. There is absolute joy and wonder to be had in the simplest of moments – like watching the sunset over the horizon or spending time

with a family member. Enjoy the little things, because one day you may look back and discover they were the big things.

8. **People regret the things they did NOT do.** – You miss 100% of the shots you never take. Choices, chances and changes – [start making them](#). You must make a choice to take a chance, or your life will never change. In the end, more so than the mistakes we made, we regret the chances we didn't take, relationships we were afraid to have, and the decisions we waited too long to make.
9. **Small people can make a BIG difference.** – Stay positive when negativity surrounds you. Smile when others frown. It's an easy way to make a difference. There are many small, simple actions you can make to profoundly impact your family, your community, and the world. You could pick up and throw away some trash you see on the street. Send thoughts of loving kindness, support and peace to a friend. Find something in your house you no longer need and give to someone who could use it. Everyone values the gift of unexpected assistance and those who supply it. Leave everything a little better than you found it. You'll see why.
10. **Adversity makes us strong and wise.** – Pain makes you stronger. Tears make you braver. Heartbreak makes you wiser. Be grateful for your past because it helped shape who you are. And thank the past for a better future. Live for today, learn from yesterday, and hope for tomorrow. Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass, it's about [learning to dance in the rain](#).
11. **Everyone deserves kindness and respect.** – Treat everyone with kindness and respect, even those who are rude to you – not because they are nice, but because you are. There are no boundaries or classes that define a group of people that deserve to be respected. Treat everyone with the same level of respect you would give to your grandfather and the same level of patience you would have with your baby brother. People will notice your kindness.
12. **Everyone has something amazing to offer.** – Accept people just the way they are. In most cases it's impossible to change them anyway, and it's rude to try. If you give them a chance, everyone has something amazing to offer. Open your mind, arms and heart to all people; we are united in our differences, and stronger together because of them.
13. **There's no point in doing something if I'm not going to do it right.** – I'm impressed by great guitarists, writers, bloggers, painters, motivational speakers, internet entrepreneurs, computer engineers, mothers, fathers, athletes, etc. And there's only one thing they all have in common: They excel at what they do. There's no point in doing something if you aren't going to do it right. Excel at your work and excel at your hobbies. Develop a reputation for yourself, a reputation for consistent excellence. Read [The Four Agreements](#).
14. **Dishonesty should never be tolerated.** – Nobody likes a liar. In the long-run, the truth always reveals itself anyway. Either you own up to your actions or your actions will ultimately own you. Living a life of honesty creates peace of mind, and peace of mind is priceless. Period. Don't be dishonest and don't put up with people who are.
15. **Personal growth will feel uncomfortable at first.** – Growth always begins at the end of your comfort zone. So break out of your comfort zone and try something new. Fight the unfamiliar and enjoy the experience. Try out that new restaurant. Stop by the new park. Routines stagnate us. New experiences help us grow and they make life interesting. Make an effort to try something new every day this week. It can be a whole new activity or just a small experience, such as talking to a stranger. Once you get the ball rolling, many of these new experiences will open doors to life changing opportunities. And with a strategy of continuous small steps into new experiences, we are able to sidestep the biggest barrier to positive change: Fear.
16. **Happiness is a choice that comes from within.** – Being happy doesn't mean everything is perfect, it means you've decided to look beyond the imperfections. There are choices you can make every day to feel the effects of happiness. Choose to be around the right people. Choose to focus on what you have, not on what you haven't. Choose a good attitude. Choose to express gratitude. Choose to forgive. Choose to take care of your body. Begin today by taking responsibility for your own happiness. The choice is yours. Read [Stumbling on Happiness](#).
17. **The more I invest in myself, the more control I will have over my life.** – Invest time and energy in yourself every day. When you invest in yourself, you can never lose, and over time you will

change the trajectory of your life. You are simply the product of what you know. The more time and energy you spend acquiring pertinent knowledge, the more control you have over your life.

18. **Knowledge without action accomplishes nothing.** – The number one thing I persistently see holding smart people back is their own reluctance to take action with the knowledge they already have. In other words, they believe they require additional knowledge, skill, experience, etc. before they can aptly partake in an opportunity. Yes, more knowledge is great to have, but without action it doesn't get you anywhere. You've got to take baby steps. You've got to act on what you know. Remember, the acquisition of knowledge doesn't mean you're growing; growing happens when what you know changes how you live.