

Say Hello to  
your very own book of  
**Quotes**



QuotationsBook

# Quotes by Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

from QuotationsBook.com

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (28 August 1749 - 22 March 1832), commonly known as "Goethe", was a German poet, novelist, philosopher, and scientist who is considered one of the giants of the literary world. In addition, aside from being lawyer and known also as a dramatist, humanist, theorist, and painter, he is also one of few individuals considered to have been a polymath. For ten years, he was chief minister of state for the duchy of Weimar. In 1782 he was ennobled as 'von Goethe'. In his 1809 masterpiece *Elective Affinities*, he became one of the first to speculate on the nature of interpersonal chemistry.

Goethe was one of the key figures of German literature and the movement of Weimar Classicism in the late 18th and early 19th centuries; this movement coincides with Enlightenment, Sentimentality ("Empfindsamkeit"), Sturm und Drang, and Romanticism. The author of *Faust* and *Theory of Colours*, he influenced Darwin with his focus on plant morphology. Goethe's influence spread across Europe, and for the next century his works were a primary source of inspiration in music, drama, poetry, and philosophy. He is widely considered to be one of the most important thinkers in Western culture.

He who is plenteously provided for from within, needs but little from without.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The greatest difficulties lie where we are not looking for them.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Age does not make us childish, as some say; it finds us true children.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We must not take the faults of our youth with us into old age, for age brings along its own defects.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The older we get the more we must limit ourselves if we wish to be active.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Rejoice that you have still have a long time to live, before the thought comes to you that there is nothing more in the world to see.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

It is only necessary to grow old to become more charitable and even indulgent. I see no fault committed by others that I have not committed myself.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Unlike grown ups, children have little need to deceive themselves.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We are never deceived; we deceive ourselves.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The person who in shaky times also wavers only increases the evil, but the person of firm decision fashions the universe.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Ambition and love are the wings to great deeds.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Deny yourself! You must deny yourself! That is the song that never ends.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

While man's desires and aspirations stir he cannot choose but err.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The destiny of any nation at any given time depends on the opinion of its young people, those under twenty-five.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Only by joy and sorrow does a person know anything about themselves and their destiny. They learn what to do and what to avoid.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

I know nothing more mocking than a devil that despairs.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

It is only in misery that we recognize the hand of God leading good men to good.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Doubt can only be removed by action.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

I will listen to anyone's convictions, but pray keep your doubts to yourself.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We know accurately only when we know little, with knowledge doubt increases.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Dream no small dreams for they have no power to move the hearts of men.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

How can we know ourselves? Never by reflection, but only through action. Begin at once to do your duty and immediately you will know what is inside you.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Love can do much, but duty more.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

People of uncommon abilities generally fall into eccentricities when their sphere of life is not adequate to their abilities.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

They teach in academies far too many things, and far too much that is useless.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

He who does not think much of himself is much more esteemed than he imagines.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Mastery passes often for egotism.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

All the knowledge I possess everyone else can acquire, but my heart is all my own.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Correction does much, but encouragement does more. Encouragement after censure is as the sun after a shower.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

No prudent antagonist thinks light of his adversaries.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

He who enjoys doing and enjoys what he has done is happy.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Enjoy what thou has inherited from thy sires if thou wouldn't really possess it. What we employ and use is never an oppressive burden; what the moment brings forth, that only can it profit by.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Men are so constituted that every one undertakes what he sees another successful in, whether he has aptitude for it or not.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Every situation, every moment -- is of infinite worth; for it is the representative of a whole eternity.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Excellence is rarely found, more rarely valued.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

What life half gives a man, posterity gives entirely.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Wood burns because it has the proper stuff in it; and a man becomes famous because he has the proper stuff in him.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

If you modestly enjoy your fame you are not unworthy to rank with the holy.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

More light!

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Sowing is not as difficult as reaping.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Certain defects are necessary for the existence of individuality.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

It is the strange fate of man, that even in the greatest of evils the fear of the worst continues to haunt him.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Do not give in too much to feelings. A overly sensitive heart is an unhappy possession on this shaky earth.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Look closely at those who patronize you. Half are unfeeling, half untaught.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Certain flaws are necessary for the whole. It would seem strange if old friends lacked certain quirks.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Don't dissipate your powers; strive to concentrate them. Genius thinks it can do whatever it sees others doing, but it will surely repent of every ill-judged outlay.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

It seems to never occur to fools that merit and good fortune are closely united.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

If a good person does you wrong, act as though you had not noticed it. They will make note of this and not remain in your debt long.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Only learn to seize good fortune, for good fortune's always here.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Freedom consists not in refusing to recognize anything above us, but in respecting something which is above us; for by respecting it, we raise ourselves to it, and, by our very acknowledgment, prove that we bear within ourselves what is higher, and are worthy to be on a level with it

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Only law can give us freedom.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Yes! To this thought I hold with firm persistence; The last result of wisdom stamps it true; He only earns his freedom and existence Who daily conquers them anew.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

In comradeship is danger countered best.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Giving is the business of the rich.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The first and last thing required of genius is, love of the truth.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The greatest genius will never be worth much if he pretends to draw exclusively from his own resources.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Not the maker of plans and promises, but rather the one who offers faithful service in small matters. This is the person who is most likely to achieve what is good and lasting.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

For a man to achieve all that is demanded of him he must regard himself as greater than he is.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

One can be very happy without demanding that others agree with them.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A distracted existence leads us to no goal.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

What by a straight path cannot be reached by crooked ways is never won.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

There is nothing so terrible as activity without insight.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

One never goes further than when they do not know where they are going.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Difficulties increase the nearer we approach the goal.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The best government is that which teaches us to govern ourselves.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Progress has not followed a straight ascending line, but a spiral with rhythms of progress and retrogression, of evolution and dissolution.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The phrases that men hear or repeat continually, end by becoming convictions and ossify the organs of intelligence.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The most happy man is he who knows how to bring into relation the end and beginning of his life.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The man who is born with a talent which he was meant to use finds his greatest happiness in using it.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

What makes people happy is activity; changing evil itself into good by power, working in a God like manner.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The highest happiness of man is to have probed what is knowable and quietly to revere what is unknowable.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A person is never happy till their vague strivings has itself marked out its proper limitations.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Happiness is a ball after which we run wherever it rolls, and we push it with our feet when it stops.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Hatred is active, and envy passive dislike; there is but one step from envy to hate.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Hatred is something peculiar. You will always find it strongest and most violent where there is the lowest degree of culture.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Take care of your body with steadfast fidelity. The soul must see through these eyes alone, and if they are dim, the whole world is clouded.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Those are dead even for this life who hope for no other.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

It is said, that no one is a hero to their butler. The reason is, that it requires a hero to recognize a hero. The butler, however, will probably know well how to estimate his equals.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The hero draws inspiration from the virtue of his ancestors.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The history of mankind is his character.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

He is the happiest, be he king or peasant, who finds peace in his home.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Be he a king or a peasant, he is happiest who finds peace at home.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Where is the man who has the strength to be true, and to show himself as he is?

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Those who hope for no other life are dead even for this.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

In all things it is better to hope than to despair.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Man... knows only when he is satisfied and when he suffers, and only his sufferings and his satisfactions instruct him concerning himself, teach him what to seek and what to avoid. For the rest, man is a confused creature; he knows not whence he comes or whither he goes, he knows little of the world, and above all, he knows little of himself.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

One that does not think too highly of himself is more than he thinks.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Whenever I hear people talking about liberal ideas, I am always astounded that men

should love to fool themselves with empty sounds. An idea should never be liberal; it must be vigorous, positive, and without loose ends so that it may fulfill its divine mission and be productive. The proper place for liberality is in the realm of the emotions.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Daring ideas are like chessmen moved forward. They may be beaten, but they may start a winning game.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Nothing is more terrible than to see ignorance in action.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

There is nothing more frightful than imagination without taste.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The intelligent man finds almost everything ridiculous, the sensible man hardly anything.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Clever people are always the best conversations lexicon.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Every offense is avenged on earth.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A judge who cannot punish, in the end associates themselves with the criminal.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Kindness is the golden chain by which society is bound together.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The greater the knowledge, the greater the doubt.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

What is not fully understood is not possessed.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Never by reflection, but only by doing is self-knowledge possible to one.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Those who know nothing of foreign languages, knows nothing of their own.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Nothing shows a man's character more than what he laughs at.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We eagerly get hold of a law that serves as a weapon to our passions.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Napoleon affords us an example of the danger of elevating one's self to the absolute, and sacrificing everything to the carrying out of an idea.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

I've studied now Philosophy and Jurisprudence, Medicine -- and even, alas! Theology -- from end to end with labor keen; and here, poor fool with all my lore I stand, no wiser than before.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

In the end we retain from our studies only that which we practically apply.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Everywhere, we learn only from those whom we love.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

No one as ever completed their apprenticeship.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Letters are among the most significant memorial a person can leave behind them.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

There is nothing in the world more shameful than establishing one's self on lies and fables.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

What is important in life is life, and not the result of life.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

There are nine requisites for contented living: HEALTH enough to make work a pleasure; WEALTH enough to support your needs; STRENGTH enough to battle with difficulties and forsake them; GRACE enough to confess your sins and overcome them; PATIENCE enough to toil until some good is accomplished; CHARITY enough to see some good in your neighbor; LOVE enough to move you to be useful and helpful to others; FAITH enough to make real the things of God; HOPE enough to remove all anxious fears concerning the future.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Plunge boldly into the thick of life, and seize it where you will, it is always interesting.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Life is the childhood of our immortality.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

All that is noble is in itself of a quiet nature, and appears to sleep until it is aroused and summoned forth by contrast.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A person hears only what they understand.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

People should talk less and draw more. Personally, I would like to renounce speech altogether and, like organic nature, communicate everything I have to say visually.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The decline in literature indicates a decline in the nation. The two keep pace in their downward tendency.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

If I love you, what business is it of yours?

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We are shaped and fashioned by what we love.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Love is an ideal thing, marriage a real thing; a confusion of the real with the ideal never goes unpunished.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

That is the true season of love; when we believe that we alone can love, that no one could ever have loved as much before, and that no one will ever love in the same way again.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

If each one does their duty as an individual and if each one works in their own proper vocation, it will be right with the whole.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

When a wife has a good husband it is easily seen in her face.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We are the slaves of objects around us, and appear little or important according as these contract or give us room to expand.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Mathematicians are like Frenchman: whatever you say to them they translate into their own language, and forthwith it is something entirely different.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The world is for thousands a freak show; the images flicker past and vanish; the impressions remain flat and unconnected in the soul. Thus they are easily led by the opinions of others, are content to let their impressions be shuffled and rearranged and evaluated differently.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The little man is still a man.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Girls we love for what they are; men for what they promise to be.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The human mind will not be confined to any limits.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We do not have to visit a madhouse to find disordered minds; our planet is the mental institution of the universe.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A clever man commits no minor blunders.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The best fortune that can fall to a man is that which corrects his defects and makes up for his failings.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Out of moderation a pure happiness springs.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Many people take no care of their money till they come nearly to the end of it, and others do just the same with their time.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Instruction does much, but encouragement does everything.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

It is in human nature to relax, when not compelled by personal advantage or disadvantage.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Who is sure of their own motives can in confidence advance or retreat.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The effects of good music are not just because it's new; on the contrary music strikes us more the more familiar we are with it.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The unnatural, that too is natural.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Nature understands no jesting. She is always true, always serious, always severe. She is always right, and the errors are always those of man.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

In nature we never see anything isolated, but everything in connection with something else which is before it, beside it, under it and over it.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Nature goes her own way and all that to us seems an exception is really according to order.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

To hard necessity ones will and fancy must conform.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

No two men see the world exactly alike, and different temperaments will apply in different ways a principle that they both acknowledge. The same man will, indeed, often see and judge the same things differently on different occasions: early convictions must give way

to more mature ones. Nevertheless, may not the opinions that a man holds and expresses withstand all trials, if he only remains true to himself and others?

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The right man is the one that seizes the moment.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The most original of authors are not so because they advance what is new, but more because they know how to say something, as if it had never been said before.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Our passion are the true phoenixes; when the old one is burnt out, a new one rises from its ashes.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Passions are vices or virtues to their highest powers.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

There is no past that we can bring back by longing for it. There is only an eternally new now that builds and creates itself out of the Best as the past withdraws.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The little that is completed, vanishes from the sight of one who looks forward to what is

still to do.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

If a man or woman is born ten years sooner or later, their whole aspect and performance shall be different.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We can always redeem the man who aspires and strives.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Austere perseverance, hash and continuous... rarely fails of its purpose, for its silent power grows irresistible greater with time.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Oral delivery aims at persuasion and making the listener believe they are converted. Few persons are capable of being convinced; the majority allow themselves to be persuaded.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

People have a peculiar pleasure in making converts, that is, in causing others to enjoy what they enjoy, thus finding their own likeness represented and reflected back to them.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

To make converts is the natural ambition of everyone.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Secrecy has many advantages, for when you tell someone the purpose of any object right away, they often think there is nothing to it.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The philosopher must station themselves in the middle.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Objects in pictures should so be arranged as by their very position to tell their own story.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

In politics, as on the sickbed, people toss from side to side, thinking they will be more comfortable.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Our work is the presentation of our capabilities.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

People are so constituted that everybody would rather undertake what they see others do, whether they have an aptitude for it or not.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The person born with a talent they are meant to use will find their greatest happiness in using it.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The really unhappy person is the one who leaves undone what they can do, and starts doing what they don't understand; no wonder they come to grief.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The biggest problem with every art is by the use of appearance to create a loftier reality.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The highest problem of any art is to cause by appearance the illusion of a higher reality.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Personality is everything in art and poetry.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

One of the most striking signs of the decay of art is when we see its separate forms jumbled together.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Art is long, life short, judgment difficult, opportunity transient.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them to become what they are capable of being.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Napoleon for the sake of a good name broke in pieces half the world.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Every man has enough power left to carry out that of which he is convinced.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

If you treat an individual... as if he were what he ought to be and could be, he will become what he ought to be and could be.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

He who has a task to perform must know how to take sides, or he is quite unworthy of it.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

What is not started today is never finished tomorrow.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Since Time is not a person we can overtake when he is gone, let us honor him with mirth and cheerfulness of heart while he is passing.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We usually lose today, because there has been a yesterday, and tomorrow is coming.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Nothing is worth more than this day. You cannot relive yesterday. Tomorrow is still beyond your reach

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

If the mass of people hesitate to act, strike with swiftly and with boldness, the brave heart that understands and seizes opportunity can everything.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Upon the creatures we have made, we are, ourselves, at last, dependent.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Everything in the world may be endured except continual prosperity.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A collections of anecdotes and maxims is the greatest of treasures for the man of the world, for he knows how to intersperse conversation with the former in fit places, and to recollect the latter on proper occasions.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Deeply earnest and thoughtful people stand on shaky footing with the public.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

What is my life if I am no longer useful to others.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A purpose you impart is no longer your own.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Be above it! Make the world serve your purpose, but do not serve it.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Every person above the ordinary has a certain mission that they are called to fulfill.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

To the person with a firm purpose all men and things are servants.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

If you want a wise answer, ask a reasonable question.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Anecdotes and maxims are rich treasures to the man of the world, for he knows how to introduce the former at fit place in conversation.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Everything has been thought of before, but the problem is to think of it again.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Reason can never be popular. Passions and feelings may become popular, but reason will always remain the sole property of a few eminent individuals.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

People do not mind their faults being spread out before them, but they become impatient if called on to give them up.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

By seeking and blundering we learn.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A person can stand almost anything except a succession of ordinary days.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

People may live as much retired from the world as they like, but sooner or later they find themselves debtor or creditor to some one.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A great revolution is never the fault of the people, but of the government.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We can offer up much in the large, but to make sacrifices in little things is what we are seldom equal to.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A great scholar is seldom a great philosopher.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Whether a person shows themselves to be a genius in science or in writing a song, the only point is, whether the thought, the discovery, or the deed, is living and can live on.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The credit of advancing science has always been due to individuals and never to the age.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Science has been seriously retarded by the study of what is not worth knowing and of what is not knowable.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Whoever wishes to keep a secret must hide the fact that he possesses one.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

No one has ever learned fully to know themselves.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Trust yourself, then you will know how to live.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A person places themselves on a level with the ones they praise.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Know thyself? If I knew myself I would run away.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Self-knowledge comes from knowing other men.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Self-love exaggerates our faults as well as our virtues.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Taste is only to be educated by contemplation, not of the tolerably good but of the truly excellent. I therefore show you only the best works; and when you are grounded in these,

you will have a standard for the rest, which you will know how to value, without overrating them.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The senses do not deceive us, but the judgment does.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Nothing is true, but that which is simple.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

There is repetition everywhere, and nothing is found only once in the world.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

To understand one thing well is better than understanding many things by halves.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

It is delivery that makes the orators success.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

I do not speak of what I cannot praise.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

I don't know a greater advantage, than to appreciate the worth of an enemy.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The people rate strength before everything.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Stupidity is without anxiety.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

On the pinnacle of success man does not stand firm long.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Fresh activity is the only means of overcoming adversity.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Before you can do something you must first be something.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

How shall we learn to know ourselves? By reflection? Never; but only through action.

Strive to do thy duty; then you shall know what is in thee.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough; we must do.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The deed is everything, the glory is naught.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Then indecision brings its own delays, And days are lost lamenting o'er lost days. Are you in earnest? Seize this very minute; What you can do, or dream you can, begin it.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Thinking is easy, acting is difficult, and to put one's thoughts into action is the most difficult thing in the world.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

When all is said the greatest action is to limit and isolate one's self.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Beauty is everywhere a welcome guest.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Beauty is a primeval phenomenon, which itself never makes its appearance, but the reflection of which is visible in a thousand different utterances of the creative mind, and is as various as nature herself.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Beauty is a manifestation of secret natural laws, which otherwise would have been hidden from us forever.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Behavior is the mirror in which everyone shows their image

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

He is dead in this world who has no belief in another.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Oh how sweet it is to hear one's own convictions from another's lips.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We are so constituted that we believe the most incredible things; and, once they are engraved upon the memory, woe to him who would endeavor to erase them.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

If you must tell me your opinions, tell me what you believe in. I have plenty of doubts of my own.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Mountains cannot be surmounted except by winding paths.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The heights charm us, but the steps do not; with the mountain in our view we love to walk the plains.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Life belongs to the living, and he who lives must be prepared for changes.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

What I possess I would gladly retain. Change amuses the mind, yet scarcely profits.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Human beings, by change, renew, rejuvenate ourselves; otherwise we harden.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Everybody wants to be somebody; nobody wants to grow.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Men show their character in nothing more clearly than what they think laughable.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Talents are best nurtured in solitude. Character is best formed in the stormy billows of the world.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Character develops itself in the stream of life.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The formation of one's character ought to be everyone's chief aim.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Character, in great and little things, means carrying through what you feel able to do.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Character is formed in the stormy billows of the world.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Superstition is the poetry of life.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Seldom in the business and transactions of ordinary life, do we find the sympathy we want.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Talent develops in quiet places, character in the full current of human life.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A really great talent finds its happiness in execution.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

What chance gathers she easily scatters. A great person attracts great people and knows how to hold them together.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Thinking is more interesting than knowing, but less interesting than looking.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

All truly wise thoughts have been thoughts 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.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Thought expands, but paralyzes; action animates, but narrows.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Nothing is to be rated higher than the value of the day.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We always have time enough, if we will but use it aright.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

One always has time enough, if one will apply it well.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Traveling is like gambling: it is always connected with winning and losing, and generally where it is least expected we receive, more or less than what we hoped for.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

As soon as you trust yourself, you will know how to live.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

It is easier to perceive error than to find truth, for the former lies on the surface and is easily seen, while the latter lies in the depth, where few are willing to search for it.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Whatever you cannot understand, you cannot possess.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

To know someone here or there with whom you can feel there is understanding in spite of distances or thoughts expressed -- That can make life a garden.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The man of understanding finds everything laughable.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

So long as you live and work, you will be misunderstood; to that you must resign yourself once and for all. Be silent!

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Some of our weakness is born in us, some of it comes through education; it is a big question as to which gives us the most trouble.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

No one should be rich except those who understand it.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The wealth that cannot be administered is a burden.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Those that are firm in their will mold the world to themselves.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

He who is firm in will molds the world to himself.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Who is the wisest man? He who neither knows or wishes for anything else than what happens.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

This is the highest wisdom that I own; freedom and life are earned by those alone who conquer them each day anew.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Wisdom is found only in truth.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We are never further from what we wish than when we believe that we have what we wished for.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The Woman-Soul leadeth us upward and on!

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Be generous with kindly words, especially about those who are absent.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Every spoken word arouses our self-will.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

When ideas fail, words come in very handy.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The world is so empty if one thinks only of mountains, rivers and cities; but to know someone who thinks and feels with us, and who, though distant is close to us in spirit, this makes the earth for us an inhabited garden.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The world remains ever the same.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

If any man wishes to write a clear style, let him first be clear in his thoughts.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Every author in some degree portrays himself in his works, even if it be against his will.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

He who does not expect a million readers should not write a line.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Great endowments often announce themselves in youth in the form of singularity and awkwardness.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The people who are absent are the ideal; those who are present seem to be quite commonplace.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

We cannot fashion our children after our desires, we must have them and love them as God has given them to us.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

If children grew up according to early indications, we should have nothing but geniuses.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The Christian religion, though scattered and abroad will in the end gather itself together at the foot of the cross.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Master and Doctor are my titles; for ten years now, without repose, I held my erudite recitals and led my pupils by the nose.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elementary truth

the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings and material assistance which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Who is the most sensible person? The one who finds what is to their own advantage in all that happens to them.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Common sense is the genius of humanity.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

No one would talk much in society if they knew how often they misunderstood others.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

No wise combatant underestimates their antagonist.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

I will not be as those who spend the day in complaining of headache, and the night in drinking the wine that gives it.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

You accuse a woman of wavering affections, but don't blame her; she is just looking for a consistent man.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Where there is much light, the shadow is deep.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Let everyone sweep in front of his own door, and the whole world will be clean.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Courage and modesty are the most unequivocal of virtues, for they are of a kind that hypocrisy cannot imitate; they too have this quality in common, that they are expressed by the same color.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Wealth lost is something lost, honor lost is something lost: Courage lost all is lost.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Rest not. Life is sweeping by; go and dare before you die. Something mighty and sublime, leave behind to conquer time.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

There is a courtesy of the heart; it is allied to love. From its springs the purest courtesy in the outward behavior.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The coward threatens when he is safe.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A creation of importance can only be produced when its author isolates himself, it is a child of solitude.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

To create something you must be something.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

There is no crime of which I do not deem myself capable.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

The person of analytic or critical intellect finds something ridiculous in everything. The person of synthetic or constructive intellect, in almost nothing.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Strike the dog dead, it's but a critic!

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

One ought, every day at least, to hear a little song, read a good poem, see a fine picture, and, if it were possible, to speak a few reasonable words.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

Death is a commingling of eternity with time; in the death of a good man, eternity is seen looking through time.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von

A useless life is an early death.

- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang Von





QuotationsBook