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Quotes by Wittgenstein, Ludwig

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Ludwig Josef Johann Wittgenstein (April 26, 1889 – April 29, 1951) was an Austrian philosopher who contributed several ground-breaking works to modern philosophy, primarily on the foundations of logic, the philosophy of language, and the philosophy of mind. He is widely regarded as one of the most influential philosophers of the 20th century.

Death is not an event in life: we do not live to experience death. If we take eternity to mean not infinite temporal duration but timelessness, then eternal life belongs to those who live in the present.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

A philosopher who is not taking part in discussions is like a boxer who never goes into the ring.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Like everything metaphysical the harmony between thought and reality is to be found in the grammar of the language.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

The human body is the best picture of the human soul.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Humor is not a mood but a way of looking at the world. So if it is correct to say that humor was stamped out in Nazi Germany, that does not mean that people were not in good spirits, or anything of that sort, but something much deeper and more important.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

No one likes having offended another person; hence everyone feels so much better if the other person doesn't show he's been offended. Nobody likes being confronted by a wounded spaniel. Remember that. It is much easier patiently -- and tolerantly -- to avoid the person you have injured than to approach him as a friend. You need courage for that.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

You must always be puzzled by mental illness. The thing I would dread most, if I became mentally ill, would be your adopting a common sense attitude; that you could take it for granted that I was deluded.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Never stay up on the barren heights of cleverness, but come down into the green valleys of silliness.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Knowledge is in the end based on acknowledgement.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Language is a part of our organism and no less complicated than it.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

If we spoke a different language, we would perceive a somewhat different world.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Someone who knows too much finds it hard not to lie.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

I sit astride life like a bad rider on a horse. I only owe it to the horse's good nature that I am not thrown off at this very moment.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

The logic of the world is prior to all truth and falsehood.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Logic takes care of itself; all we have to do is to look and see how it does it.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

For a large class of cases -- though not for all -- in which we employ the word meaning it can be defined thus: the meaning of a word is its use in the language.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

A serious and good philosophical work could be written consisting entirely of jokes.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

It is one of the chief skills of the philosopher not to occupy himself with questions which do not concern him.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Philosophy is like trying to open a safe with a combination lock: each little adjustment of the dials seems to achieve nothing, only when everything is in place does the door open.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Philosophy is not a theory but an activity.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

The real discovery is the one which enables me to stop doing philosophy when I want to.

-- The one that gives philosophy peace, so that it is no longer tormented by questions which bring itself into question.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

We regard the photograph, the picture on our wall, as the object itself (the man, landscape, and so on) depicted there. This need not have been so. We could easily imagine people who did not have this relation to such pictures. Who, for example, would

be repelled by photographs, because a face without color and even perhaps a face in reduced proportions struck them as inhuman.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

A man will be imprisoned in a room with a door that's unlocked and opens inwards; as long as it does not occur to him to pull rather than push.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Don't get involved in partial problems, but always take flight to where there is a free view over the whole single great problem, even if this view is still not a clear one.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

It is so characteristic, that just when the mechanics of reproduction are so vastly improved, there are fewer and fewer people who know how the music should be played.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Our civilization is characterized by the word progress. Progress is its form rather than making progress being one of its features. Typically it constructs. It is occupied with building an ever more complicated structure. And even clarity is sought only

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Not every religion has to have St. Augustine's attitude to sex. Why even in our culture marriages are celebrated in a church, everyone present knows what is going to happen that night, but that doesn't prevent it being a religious ceremony.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

For a truly religious man nothing is tragic.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Man has to awaken to wonder -- and so perhaps do peoples. Science is a way of sending him to sleep again.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

There are remarks that sow and remarks that reap.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Our greatest stupidities may be very wise.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

It is a dogma of the Roman Church that the existence of God can be proved by natural reason. Now this dogma would make it impossible for me to be a Roman Catholic. If I thought of God as another being like myself, outside myself, only infinitely more powerful, then I would regard it as my duty to defy him.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

If you do know that here is one hand, we'll grant you all the rest.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

If a person tells me he has been to the worst places I have no reason to judge him; but if he tells me it was his superior wisdom that enabled him to go there, then I know he is a fraud.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

A man's thinking goes on within his consciousness in a seclusion in comparison with which any physical seclusion is an exhibition to public view.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

In order to be able to set a limit to thought, we should have to find both sides of the limit thinkable (i.e. we should have to be able to think what cannot be thought).

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

You get tragedy where the tree, instead of bending, breaks.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

One often makes a remark and only later sees how true it is.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

The limits of my language are the limits of my mind. All I know is what I have words for.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Resting on your laurels is as dangerous as resting when you are walking in the snow. You doze off and die in your sleep.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

It seems to me that, in every culture, I come across a chapter headed Wisdom. And then I know exactly what is going to follow: Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

Uttering a word is like striking a note on the keyboard of the imagination.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

A new word is like a fresh seed sown on the ground of the discussion.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig

A confession has to be part of your new life.

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig



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