

# 50 THINGS I HAVE LEARNED IN 50 YEARS

1. Freedom in life comes when you can say something like: "I'm cool with you not liking me. Not everybody has good taste." **2. Make three lists. A) The people you like to spend time with. B) The things you like to do. C) The places you want to go. Hang out with these people. Do these things. Go to these places.** 3. Be somebody who makes everybody else feel like a somebody. **4. Giving into your fears is the easiest way to dismantle your dreams and humiliate your hopes.** 5. Do not obsess or worry about what you cannot control. Unless you just have a thing for being miserable. **6. You can't change other people so hopefully your happiness doesn't rest in that desire. But you can totally change your reaction to other people and that simple change can give you great happiness.** 7. May I love myself for who I am and not who others want me to be. May I love others for who they are and not who I want them to be. **8. "No" is a complete sentence. No need to justify your decisions. You don't stumble upon balance in life. You create it by choosing your priorities. Decide what matters. Then do what matters.** 9. When people treat you well and are kind to you—treat them well and be kind. When people disrespect you—respect them and be kind. They represent their values. You represent yours. **10. We are being robbed from a life of meaning not because we aren't busy but because we are too busy.** 11. Two people exist in life who you will never forget. Not the athlete, artist, genius, or millionaire. They come and go. But, the one who authentically and joyfully celebrates with you in times of prosperity and the one who encourages and helps you in your darkest hour. **12. Comparison is a dangerous acquaintance. Don't compare yourself to others. Compare yourself to who you were yesterday.** 13. Conflict is inevitable in all relationships. But, the presence of conflict should not mean the absence of respect. Respect between two parties is essential during conflict. Listen intently. Use good words. Value the other person more than your need to win. **14. Don't quarrel with people who are committed to misunderstanding you. Don't participate in every argument you are invited to. If you wrestle with a pig, both of you are going to get muddy and only one of you is going to enjoy it.** 15. Progress happens only when we become more devoted to our dreams than we are committed to comfort. Do something difficult that stretches you and forces you to grow. **16. Criticizing others does not make you smarter or better than the one you are criticizing. It just makes you mean.** 17. Delayed gratification is one of life's essential lessons. Discipline is making decisions and forming habits based upon what you want most in life—not what you want now. You can experience pain with discipline now or pain with regret later. **18. You will not be able to do great, essential things when you are distracted by little, unimportant things. Eliminate distractions. Be present. Be focused. Be courageous.** 19. More than glass or eggs, people are fragile. Handle them with care—treat them better than your phone or a family heirloom. **20. We cripple people who are capable of walking when we choose to carry them. Stop enabling others.** 21. Envy is to the soul what rust is to iron. It slowly eats away. First creating blemishes and then holes. Envy is resentful of other people's blessings. Gratitude is a rust-buster and a hole-filler by being mindful and thankful for our own blessings. Be grateful. **22. I have discovered the only way to make amazing sausage is to make some bad sausage first, some pretty good sausage next, some very good sausage after that, and the amazing sausage last. And so it is with the rest of life.** 23. Forgive yourself. Do you really want your future to be comprised of watching the video of some of the most painful moments of your life? It's time to start creating some new videos. Some good ones. **24. The forgiven doesn't let his or her past mistakes destroy their future. And the forgiven becomes forgiving because he or she doesn't want the past mistakes of others to destroy his or her future.** 25. You have to practice generosity to experience the joys of generosity. You begin to fully live when you give to those who can never repay you. Life isn't measured by how long it is, but by its donation to the world.

**26. Gossip is created by critical people, spread by spiteful people, and accepted by insecure people. Don't gossip. Don't listen to gossip. You have better options. Stand-up for those not present. Speak only life-giving words.** 27. Humor is the opposite of seriousness, not despair. Don't take yourself so seriously. Give yourself some grace. Have fun. Laugh. **28. We most look like Jesus when we serve, give, and forgive. Doing these is a blessing to others and ourselves. Do these things.** 29. Jesus wasn't interested in standing with those who were great. He had a better plan: sitting with those who were hurting. Be like Jesus. **30. Don't judge somebody's story by the chapter you walked in on. You don't know what they've been through. Be patient and kind to everybody.** 31. You aren't a carton of ice cream. That means you can't make everybody happy. So stop trying. You won't miss the stress and disappointment. **32. People will label you. Fat, guilty, lazy, alone, old, outsider, failure, etc.... Their labeling says more about them and less about you. And, you are the one who chooses to accept the label or not. Don't accept it. Write your own story and create your own, better labels.** 33. Guilt and shame are the taxes you pay for holding on to your mistakes and failures. Let stuff go. **34. Don't get annoyed by the small stuff. If you do, you will spend your life being annoyed. Better ways exist to spend your life than always being annoyed. Like being happy. So let stuff go and be happy.** 35. I believe what I believe. I refine these beliefs through prayer, reading, and thoughtful reflection. I'm not always correct, so I leave space to be taught something by anyone. **36. Don't be like Google. Wait until somebody has finished their sentence until you start guessing and suggesting things. Listening is a beautiful act of love. Do it better.** 37. People are interested in how much we care far more than how much we know. Extreme knowing is called genius. Extreme caring is called love. The world needs love more than it needs genius. **38. Would you rather have cool stories to tell or lots of crap cluttering your closets? Invest in people and experiences—not stuff. Do things that make you forget to check your phone.** 39. I can think of no worse body of water to swim in than the sea of other people's expectations. People drown in that sea every single day. Find your own pond, river, lake, or ocean filled with the waters of authenticity, growth, and grace. **40. For all those in any kind of relationship: It is better to embrace your beloved's humanity than to put them on a pedestal. Expecting perfection from another person will only cause disappointment for you and anxiety for them.** 41. Obstacles and failures happen. Don't quit. Keep going. Life's most challenging roads lead to the most rewarding and beautiful destinations. **42. Play is like hitting the reset button. It is not just for children. Play is for all those who don't want to grow old. Laughter, creativity, rest, happiness, fitness, community, and restoration can all happen because of play. So don't forget to play.** 43. People sacrifice growth and possibility on the altars of comfort and security. Don't be one of those people. **44. The point of prayer is not to profit from Christ, but to resemble him.** 45. Don't be distracted by your past, your future, the news, gossip, worry, or what other people think about you. Be fully present and fully engaged in the moment: with others, with yourself, and with God. **46. When somebody is hurting, don't give them advice or try to fix them. Just be present. Your presence is what we are most qualified to give and your presence is what they need most.** 47. Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you. **48. Nothing wrong with turning off your phone. Or cancelling plans. Or doing something you enjoy doing like making sausage or riding a mountain bike instead of doing something you are expected to do like respond to email or crush our to-do list. It's called self-care.** 49. We are not on Earth long enough to spend significant amounts of time and energy with people who diminish our happiness and drain the life out of us. **50. God chose Joseph over a king, Mary over a celebrity, and Nazareth over Jerusalem. God is saying to all of us nobodies from obscure places to be prepared because He is getting ready to do something great in us and through us.**