

100 + POEMS
FOR HOLIDAYS AND
SPECIAL OCCASIONS
BY FREDERICK DOUGLAS HARPER

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EL SHADDAI GEBREYES

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ISBN:	Softcover	978-1-4771-0727-0
	Ebook	978-1-4771-0728-7

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Preface

Are you looking for the perfect poem for a special occasion? The following pages offer you more than one hundred options for selecting poetry that honors a variety of occasions and several pages of insightful prose within the section on spirituality with forgiveness. This memorable prose and these timely poems were originally written by Frederick Douglas Harper, an accomplished Howard University Professor Emeritus credited with producing 12 volumes of poetry on different subjects.

Harper explores themes both spiritual and secular in a way that is true to the human experience. He maintains focus on matters from social justice to love and romance without sacrificing the integrity of his work. He is at once accessible and far-reaching. His probing mind takes the reader on a journey through a wide range of meaningful topics, including family, beauty, and time.

Touching the heart, this collection of poetry and prose for holidays and special occasions is filled with wisdom and is proof of the therapeutic value of the written word. Harper's poetry and prose is universal. It will inspire you to elevate your understanding of even the most familiar holidays in life, even if you had not previously made a habit of reading poetry or quoting prose. I ask you to commit to reading this book and drawing from the wisdom of this great artist, who is humble enough to admit his ability to write poetry and prose is a gift from God and that writing involves communicating with the spirits of his ancestors.

Waking up sometimes at 4:00 a.m. for weeks consecutively, Harper is not in complete control of how and when his poetry or prose is formed. His writing process is very spiritual; it proves his selfless love and his passion for poetry and prose are genuinely inspired. To write great poetry or prose, we ought to be connected with a source greater than ourselves.

Harper usually writes his poems by hand first and then types them into his computer. This ensures that the essence of the

message he is trying to capture is not lost. Losing sleep is the cost for giving birth to new poems, but it is a small price to pay to have this legacy of poetry to share with the world.

“Let the idea come to you and let it flow through you, like music to the untrained,” are words of advice from Harper. This explains part of his philosophy when it comes to writing poetry. He’s a naturalist. He has never studied poetry academically, and that is what contributes to his authenticity.

Today’s writers can learn from Harper’s example at making poetry relevant to life’s experiences. Harper is not a bitter poet. He is not angry. His poetic voice as with his speaking voice is measured and rhythmic. He speaks his truth with assuredness and with the power to relate to diverse audiences. He speaks sagely to the soul, thus, liberating the reader from conscious or unconscious fears that chain the reader to rigid patterns of thinking.

It is said that we are—each one of us—God’s poem. Nothing could be more evident through reading Harper’s poetry than the truth that there is a divine hand in the events that shape our lives and the circumstances that most impact us. So I recommend you read this book with a sincere heart searching for ways to celebrate some of life’s greatest holidays and special occasions, whether socially or in solitude.

These pages represent some of Harper’s greatest meditations on life cycles here on earth and capture his prophetic voice for what is to come. As a library scientist, I compiled this anthology to honor the relationships in life that matter most. These poems and selected prose instill value in our loved ones and open our minds to the power and potential of the human spirit.

It has been my honor to collaborate with Dr. Harper on this collection of poetry and prose that is ranked by readers of his work with the writings of Khalil Gibran and Rumi. I hope his work inspires you to see the poetry in every occasion and within every soul.

Reading Harper's poetry is pure joy. I was introduced to his poetry online, as I was searching for poems under the category of poetry therapy. Harper's work offers healing and covers so many different aspects of life; I appreciate its comprehensive nature. My hope in compiling this collection of poetry and prose is that readers will connect with Harper's work in a meaningful way and share his writing with loved ones on special occasions and holidays.

This is poetry and prose with a purpose. It is meant to be shared on occasions like weddings, funerals, graduations, and Valentine's Day. You'll find many great treasures within the following pages. Through engaging with this text, I trust that you will find great pleasure and comfort, peace and enlightenment. Remember not to keep the treasures under lock and key, rather let Harper's words be on display for all to see.

— El Shaddai Gebreyes

ABOUT THE POET

Frederick Douglas Harper has authored more than 1,200 poems. His 12 poetry books include *Tributes* (2012), *Time and Timing* (2010), *Beyond Fear* (2008), *The Light Within Us* (2007), *Transitions in Life and to Death* (2007), *Poetica Erotica* (2006), *Spiritual Teacher Speaks* (2005), *Poems for Young People* (2004), *Love Poems of Frederick Douglas Harper* (2003), *God's Gifts: Spiritual Writings* (2003), *Romantica: On Peace and Romance* (1988), and *Poems on Love and Life* (1985, 2004). Dr. Harper has been referred to as a spiritual master by some of his readers and followers. His poetry on spirituality, love, giving, forgiveness, and social justice has been compared to the great works of Rumi and Khalil Gibran.

Harper has authored 21 books and monographs, including a novel (*The Durabone Prophecies*) and college textbooks. Furthermore, he has served as Editor-in-Chief of three major scholarly journals. His poems were read regularly on WPFW Radio, 89.3 in Washington, DC by the late Nap Turner for more than 15 years, alongside the poetry of the famous Langston Hughes, and his books have sold worldwide. Moreover, Harper has presented conference papers, public speeches, and lectures on hundreds of occasions throughout the United States and in numerous other countries. Harper has two sons and three grandchildren. He transcended childhood challenges of family death, father abandonment, and poverty to become one of the most achieved Americans of his era. Along with educational and literary accomplishments, Harper has jogged more than 41,000 miles and has worked as a university professor for 42 years.

POEM BOOKS BY THE POET

- Harper, F. D. (2012). *Tributes*. Bloomington, IN: Xlibris.
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Acknowledgments

Jasmine Watkins, doctoral student in Educational Psychology at Howard University, deserves a special thank you for her assistance with reviewing the poems and prose in this anthology.

POEMS FOR HOLIDAYS

VALENTINE'S DAY

MEANING OF ROMANTIC LOVE

Romantic love is two dynamos that turn on and
 Feed into each other;
It is total energy directed toward another that
 Makes one oblivious to time and space;
Romantic love is that emotion that contradicts and
 Obscures rationality, reality, and responsibility;
It is that acted-out fantasy realized for the moment
 And hoped for forever;
Romantic love is two persons alone in the universe
 Who prize each other's presence and consume
 Each other's essence for every moment and in
 Every good way;
It is the visceral excitement that compels the
 Fulfillment of one's capacity for sensuality,
 Sensitivity, and possibility;
Romantic love is that ecstatic, good feeling that
 Provides a secure feeling, enhances worldly
 Appreciation, promotes confidence, and overhauls
 Physical and psychological health;
It is the force that drives people out of their skin,
 Pushes them to a higher level of emotional
 Realization, and overpowers human control;
Romantic love is giving for the joy of giving, sharing
 For the sake of sharing, and enjoying each other
 For the pleasure of each other.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2003). *Love poems of Frederick Douglas Harper*.

VALENTINE'S DAY

LET US WRITE A SCRIPT IN OUR HEARTS

Let us write a script in our hearts,
And let us play it out from
 Moment to moment in spontaneity;

Let our needs be felt and realized,
 Our drives reduced,
 Our anxieties subdued,
 Our depression minimized;

Let us enjoy our others and
 The worlds around us as we encounter;
Let us enjoy our own selves;
Let us eat, rest, explore, and talk
 In the presence of each other's
 Comfort, good company, and security;

Let us write a script from moment to moment
 In our hearts and
 In our lives.

VALENTINE'S DAY

ROMANTICA

Again, we meet in the common air of
Our private space – to breathe, I hope, the
Anticipation of love's possible excitement
From this serene peace; your fresh flower
Has sprung from youth's tender bud, so
Luring to the patience of my long wait and
The wisdom of my awaited patience.

With face to the light of you, I fix my
Energy to the spirit of your field; so
Wanting to be with you, to touch with eyes
And arms but not too soon so as to spoil
The pleasure of our precious urgings and
Restrained glee.

Let not your presentation of reservation
Betray future's life of a whole love of two –
Of a spiritual union destined for the divine
Creation of love's life from our shared bond,
Our priceless oneness, our future hopes,
Our sensual moments of untempered desire.

Come with me, be with me, romance with me,
And let our eternal love be an unending evening
Of special things shared – of sparkling drink with
Rhythmical dance, of musical tunes under many
Full moons, of colorful flowers and pastel towels,
Of tender touch and vacations much.

Come with me to the sacred temple, or simply
Stand with me under God's old oak tree;
Allow me to veil your face under the purest
Lace to the slight peek of your shining eyes
And the sweet gentle reach of your life's breath—
Yes, be my wife, be with me in this special
Moment of ceremony, and touch tenderly and
Ever slowly your lips upon mine; to seal
Evermore the energy of our romantic union
And precious love.

Go patiently we will in the wind of destiny's call
And with sweet memories of dreams made true;
Create we will a life of two or more —
With shared fortunes and misfortunes, with
Cherished joys and borne pains, and with a
Love unyielding to life's tests of time and a
Romance that will never die.

Let me come with you, be with you, and
Stay with you my lady; let our love anew grow
And pierce deep within our souls an untarnished
Commitment and an unbroken peace;
Let our lasting love scream forth in silent truth
Our romance forevermore to all the universe
In the sacred message of:

ROMANTICA, ROMANTICA, ROMANTICA!

VALENTINE'S DAY

LOVE ME NOT WITH WORDS ONLY

Great, how sweet the sound of your voice
In accolade and promise,
The twinkle and glitter of your mirror's eye
Complement the timbre of your utterance,
Your vibrations bring warm news to my ear,
Good news I like to hear,
But oh how transient the sounds, though sweet;

Love me not with words only,
But with your good deeds;
Let me know that you care for me—
Through action, effort, and sacrifice;

Let us share time, let us eat—
Eat under the shade of a summer's tree,
Dance in the spotlight of the public's eye,
Hold hands in strides of step and time;

Let us care for our lives and even that of another;
Let us work together, plan together, play together,
Laugh together, meditate together, sacrifice
Together, hurt together, and feel good together;

Love me with your complete feelings, actions, and
Thoughts,
And love me not with words only.

VALENTINE'S DAY

SPEAK TO ME OF LOVE AND MORE

When I first looked at you,
I saw something special;
I saw something special
With you, in you, and between us.
When I first looked at you, I felt something special;
When I first looked at you, I was special —
We were special.

So answer me and strip free
The truth of your presence coming;
Is your image the echo of my ideal?
Speak to me of such and more:
Through eyes bright like candles' glow
And unarming smiles of coy around the
Tenderness of lips so virgin and pure;
Through natural beauty untouched by
False disguise and spiritual energy so
Flowing to the talents of your future's call;
Through the life of movement so confident
Yet modestly unartificial and true.

Speak to me of such by more:
Is this first parting's sweetness a passing
Dream to keep?
Is it the inspiration of the Inspirer's design
To know you once in passing, or will privilege
Be destiny's desire to look once more upon the
Light of your lovely face aglow and budding
Energy in flow?

Speak to me sweet flower, and pray
To chance to smell once more the fragrance
Of your presence, and feel once more the
Vibrancy of your natural way.

Be it friendship or more;
Or a spiritual passing of two destined souls
Who love the world so much so as to want so
Much to give of ourselves to that world
Through the gift of ourselves to each other.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2003). *Love poems of Frederick Douglas Harper*.

VALENTINE'S DAY

A POET'S POEM TO A FRIEND'S FRIEND

You ask me to write a poem
For a friend not near;
Though miles away, one you have known
Closely over the years;
An unusual request to me I must tell;
But one not denied since it seems
You so care.

A small price of time to give such precious
Thought, for a long-lasting bond
On each part sought;
With nostalgic memories of childhood years;
Remain close you have, yet seldom as near;
It's been years and miles of telephone talk,
Between movies, theatres, and city-park walks.

So the essence of friendship, it seems
Two have learned,
Out of much shared experience and
Mutual concern;
And thus this poet closes with good thoughts
Of my task,
In trust that your dear friendship
Will continue to last.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2003). *Love poems of Frederick Douglas Harper*.

FATHER'S DAY

A MAN'S PRAYER

Great God of all, humble us as men before
Your omnipresent Spirit, and accept us as
The seeds of Your precious human life;
Lower our heads to honor You in praise—
For Your divine creations of us and all that
Stems sacred from You.

As grandfathers, fathers, and keepers of life,
We beg of You dear God to accept our
Prayerful thanks for the good You allow us to
Do and attempt to do for and with our sons,
In trying to help them to become worthy men in
Your sight and worthy travelers of Your path.

We pray that You will open our hearts to the
Way of humility, and temper the arrogance and
Anger that arise in us from time to time;
Dear God, bless our hands to create for
Good, and condemn the hands of destruction
That can drive us to ways of ill will.

Teach us, we implore, to honor Your name
By honoring our women as the very sacred
Temples of Your life reproduced; teach us
To raise our young in the ways of right,
And in the way of a deference for their elders
Who care for them and care about them.

Teach us the way of honesty and hard work,
And guide us in Your light of responsibility,
Love, self-pride, and decency; teach us to love,
Respect, and care for our families; teach us to
Respect worthy others as we should respect

Ourselves, to love worthy others as we should
Love ourselves, and to abhor greed and selfishness.

Our dear God, we beg of you to
Purge the war-like urge to slay from our very
Souls, and lead us to ways of rightness as role
Models for our daughters and sons who
Look up to us; we pray to You dear God
To remind us as men to love our fathers and
Our grandfathers, and to honor the men who helped
Us to become men; always make us mindful to
Remember those men who perished before us —
By accident, battle of war, or other circumstance.

Direct our hearts and spirits toward a way of
Tolerance and benevolence, and away from that
Of intolerance, hatred, and wrongful destruction;
Teach us, from day to day, to trust, appreciate, and
Work with our fellow brothers toward survival and
Security for ourselves, our families, and the global
Community in which we live;
Make us ever mindful to respect and love our
Daughters, wives, mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and
Other dear loved ones.

Give us the courage to live for good cause, and
Not to kill or die as an excuse for pain and power;
Oh God, give us the wisdom to do right and the
Courage and good strength to do our best;
Shear and sear all evil from the marrow of our
Bones, and endear our souls, minds, and muscles
To a way of caring for all life and a righteous
Giving of ourselves.

In Your precious name and spirit, as men,
We humbly pray.

AMEN.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2003). *God's gifts: Spiritual writings*.

FATHER'S DAY

NOSTALGIA III

He was big, I little;
 But both men in our sights;
We worked together and played together,
 At day and night.

I remember, and will forever, his
Kindness and love, though only a small child;
Together, we shared time:
 Walking in the corn field,
 Feeding chickens and the hog,
 Driving a mule-driven wagon.

I watched him pray in church, drive his car,
 Work at two jobs, plant and harvest,
 Make old-fashioned wine, and care for
 His wife and offspring of eight.

I, a child of seven, was by his side when he
Died so peacefully, so courageously on a small
Bed alongside a sun-lighted, open window.

Granddad, I will always miss you;
Granddad, I will always love you.

MOTHER'S DAY

THANKS MOTHER

There is nothing you can say,
That is enough to thank your mother;
There is nothing you can do,
That is enough to thank your mother.

A mother is a trustee of God's seed,
A sacred temple of life;
A mother's touch cannot be duplicated,
Her comforting voice is never replicated.

A mother's greatest gift is the gift of life,
Her highest status is that of motherhood.
No matter what else a mother might be,
No matter what a mother does –
A mother is a mother.

Thanks Mom; I love you.

MOTHER'S DAY

A MOTHER'S HANDS

Let's *not* forget so easily
The hands that cared for us in youth—
That rocked us to sleep,
Prepared our lunch for school,
Pressed a shirt, skirt, jeans,
Or a dress for wear;
The hands that cared for us in sickness,
Soothed the tears from our eyes,
Turned the pages of a book as we
Learned to read;

Let's *not* forget the hands that hugged us
As pain was kissed away—the same
Kind hands that placed food in our mouths;

So kneel and yield to your mother's presence
Or spirit's remain,
And say, "Thank you mother on
This day of celebration or on any and
Every day of my appreciation."

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *Transitions in life and to death*.

EASTER

JESUS, DIVINE LIGHT OF GOD

Jesus was light,
Jesus is light—
Oh so bright;
Light-years ahead of his time;
A healer and teacher divine;

Jesus was the ultimate light of
LOVE,
GIVING,
FORGIVING;

As divine light of God,
He showed the way,
His teachings light the way today.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY

DEATH OF A HERO

My heart falls fast and low
Like Galileo's weights
From the Tower of Pisa;
What news has been brought to my ears
Through that miraculous instrument of Bell;

I slump in my chair,
My breath is deep and rapid;
Pain, fear, anger, and shock
Rush to my viscera like
Mad dogs to a lone bone!

Can it be true, can it be true, can it be true?
The hope is gone, the spirit is gone,
The dynamo of the people is gone,
Taken away by the guided missile of man;
The King is gone, the King is gone,
The King is gone;
Dr. Martin Luther King is dead.

MEMORIAL DAY

ODE TO A WOUNDED* VETERAN

(Transition: Body, Mind, and Spirit)

Yes, you did not know life
Until you came close to death,
But still you have not chosen to turn
Injury or near-death into hopelessness
And failure's resign;
But, rather, to turn pain into beauty;

You once stood at the precipice
Of helplessness, but you lifted
Your body by your will and strong spirit,
And you soared to the highest plane
Of humanness as an eagle;
You soared to the highest plane
Of a battlefield as a warrior still;

You have done what abled mortals
Have not chosen to try or willed
Themselves to achieve; and, in doing so,
You are whole in mind and spirit.

"Wounded" is used in the title instead of disabled, because disability is often a state of mind, attitude, and spirit and not a state of body.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *Transitions in life and to death.*

MEANING OF HOLIDAYS

HOLIDAYS GONE ASTRAY

For some people, but too many,
Christmas means giving expensive
Gifts to people who don't or barely
 Need them, and
Showering toys on children who
Expect to play and not play a la Jesus;

Easter for some too many rings
Of chicken eggs and chocolate candy and
Baskets full of goodies –
Whatever happened to church
In the commemoration of the crucifixion,
Resurrection, and the whole meaning of
Sacrifice and holy redemption?

Thanksgiving can glut the gut –
Speeding to eat as much as possible
Before food gets cold;

That's enough for this poem;
I've made my point, I hope,
To you and maybe to myself.

PERSONAL HOLIDAY

OUR HOLIDAY

'Tis a cultural holiday of celebration;
But it matters not the differences
Of our worlds apart;
For celebrate we must on this
Merry day of glee – our love,
Ourselves;
'Tis not your holiday,
'Tis not my holiday,
But our holiday –
'Tis a special time for special people
To love and celebrate happiness.

**POEMS FOR
SPECIAL
OCCASIONS AND
CEREMONIES**

WEDDING

A WEDDING PLEDGE

In this, my left hand, I take you as my wife/husband
And hold sacred your life and welfare as long as we
Choose and hold each other;

With my right hand, I promise to work for you,
With you and for life we may create as one;
In both hands, I cup and nourish the trust we place
In each other as persons and in ourselves as a
Partnership in life.

With this heart, I set forth my allegiance to a sensitivity
For your feelings, and pledge to put no other person's
Needs or wants before your own;

With will and determination, I shall do my best to remain
Patient with your weaknesses as well as your personal
Changes over the years, and I will hold in confidence that
You will do likewise with me;

With this, my head, I will think of you wherever I am
And whenever I can as thoughts of concern for you and
Shared experiences with you.

I pledge at this moment to do all I can:

To help minimize your pains and maximize your happiness,
To forgive you for inadvertent errors of human frailty,
To respect you as a person and as my wife/husband,
To be open with you about my thoughts and feelings,
To touch you each morning and kiss you each night,
To trust in your words and actions,
To be kind, courteous, and considerate to you,

To respect your right to freedom, solitude, and
Individuality,
To commit myself totally to you and our relationship.

Furthermore,
I will try my best not to hurt you in any way or discredit
You before peers or yourself;
I will encourage your personal growth and internal peace,
I will allow no person to conspire to alienate my love for you;
Neither will I allow myself to be blinded by false
Feelings for another or life's many luring excitements;
I will talk with you, walk with you, and persevere with you
Through tests of time and condition;
I will pray with you, hope with you, struggle with you,
And suffer with you in your hardships;

Most of all, I will love you, without condition, for as long
As I can and as long as you want me to –
Hoping and trusting it will be forever.

WEDDING

I WANT TO: FOR YOU AND WITH YOU

(Marital Love)

I want to do things for you and with you,
And allow you to do for and with me;
I want to be with you as much
As we can be with each other;
I want you and want you to want me
As you simply do;
I want you to be with me
In God's love and as my wife.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (1988). *Romantica: On Peace and Romance*.

FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL

END OF A JOURNEY CONTINUED

(Transition from Physical Life to Spirit World)

When I come to the end of my journey,
I will not falter in the face of my curtain's
Fall, or exit from the stage of my destined
Call.

When I come to the end of my road
Shown clear, I will face death's claim
Without due fear, and look back, yes,
On a life well done, I will beacon
My spirit toward the light of the sun.

When I come to the end of this life's work,
I will smile in peace as I journey from
Earth; and all who would mourn me, I will
Bid them farewell, and trust in my heart,
They knew that I cared.

And when that day comes afar and not
Nearly, I hope to be in the company of
Those I love dearly; and with hands on
My loved ones and eyes toward my God,
I'll ascend from my body and head toward
The stars.

With faith in the future and good
Thoughts about the past, I will trust
That God's work will continue to last;
And as light will lead my soul to a
Place unknown, it is believed that God's
Work for me will continue to be done.

FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL

GREETINGS AT MY FUNERAL

Greetings and appreciation to all of you who
Have come, I trust, to give your most humble respect
To my good memory and comfort to my family and
 Loved ones who there remain;
I regret dearly that I cannot welcome each and
Every one of you in the flesh, but as apparent to you,
My body lies in permanent repose, void of spirit
 Now removed;
And, yet, I trust that I will live on in the hearts and minds
Of those who will remember my Earthly presence and
My most altruistic efforts in the living flesh, but,
Even more, those who will read my writings in years and
Generations to come – as many of your offspring and
Descendants may so do.

Also, I offer my sincere apology for not being able
To gather with you at the repast, but do enjoy yourselves
And eat well in my physical absence, while remembering
That my spirit and good energy will remain with you;
Also, remember that I live on in the biological lives of
My children and progeny as in the spirit of my written
Works that I have left behind with the help of Divine
And ancestral guidance as my light and source of my gifts.

Please do not grieve, but know that I'm at peace in the
Spirit world as others I have encountered from lives of
 Their Earthly past;
Although I remain aware of you and all Earthly ways,
You, of course, cannot know me again until we meet –
 Hopefully, in this celestial world.

So, farewell or goodbye until I see you again
In another world;
I bid you a good Earthly journey in preparation for this
Journey,
That is, if you are so blessed to rise in spirit to the
Abode of heavenly peace and bliss.

FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL

WHEN I LEAVE OF EARTH

When I leave of Earth
And buried in the dirt,
I will leave my soul in stores
Of words and more;
When I'm at the Divine brink of my call,
I will ready my soul after my long haul –
And I will leave behind my work well done,
As I soar toward the heaven in the
Light of the sun

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *Transitions in life and to death.*

FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL DEATH'S SUMMON

Age chases death
As an arrow its target;
Nothing remains still
Or the same,
And time, as a constant, changes
Space and images of things
Held dear;
Age weathers the rose as time
Removes loved ones from the
Flowery bush;
Year after year brings change
And sometimes earned pride,
Yet time beats down energy
And youth, though wisdom
Gained often remains as life's
Treasure of time's gift.

FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL

A PLACE WITH NO TIME

There is a place beyond our Earthly world
Where time does not exist;
Where all things are connected as one;
There's no space between events and things;
There is a place beyond our world where
All existence is unchanged or constant;

There is a place beyond our Earthly world
Where all existence is one –
Where there is no space between and
No beginning or end;

There is a place beyond our Earthly world
Where all existence is constant and One and
Whole;

There is an existence where all things are
Heavenly and Heaven is Spirit as One.

A BABY SHOWER

A BABY SHOWER'S PRAYER

God as Whole, God of us all;
God of our angelic spirits known;
Accept our appreciation on
This occasion as celebration of life;
 The most precious gift from You.
Teach us to realize our purpose as we live;
 To create and nourish life itself, and
 To grow and give of ourselves.
Accept so humbly our gratitude of
Daily gifts from You:
 The air we breathe, the water we drink,
 And the food that nourishes us.
Bless our love as Your union,
And accept our thanks for Your gift
Of ourselves to each other;
Bless the life we have created in
Our baby, and guide this life
 As Your unique gift.
Bless all our loved ones who are here today –
Each as Your unique creation, all as
Special people whom we value in life;
Bless the children here and those who
 Care for them.
In Your very precious name we offer this prayer,
AMEN.

FAMILY SUPPER OR MEAL

A SUPPER'S PRAYER

O h benevolent Spirit of God,
Hear us and accept our humble prayer;
Great and noble God of us all,
Accept our appreciation for your divine greatness
And the Gift you have given us as life itself;
Accept our praise of You as
Giver of all the good we are and do;
Be ever gracious in accepting our thanks
For this food as the substance of life, and
For the water and good drink that sustain us
From day to day;
Bless our family as a unit and bless each
Of us here today as your creation;
Bless the less fortunate to be fortunate,
And the very fortunate to help the unfortunate;
Bless all those among
The human race of Earth as You bless the
Homeless of the world;
Bless the young and the old, bless the
Endangered life of Earth and those
Who protect and nourish the living;
As we eat now in love and good spirit,
Bless us to be forever appreciative of
Your gifts from day to day.

AMEN.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2003). *God's gifts: Spiritual writings*.

FAMILY SUPPER OR MEAL A TABLE PRAYER

As we sit around
Your gifts of life,
We humbly pray
Our praise of You.
Oh dear and gracious God,
We beseech you to
Accept our meager
Prayer of thanks for Your
Great blessings of this our
Table's gifts;
Keep us together, and
Bless us forever,
To be healthy and happy
In your light;
Nourish our bodies,
And breathe strength
Into our bodies and souls;
In your most precious
And benevolent name,
We pray to You,

AMEN.

FAMILY REUNION

ANCESTRY

The branches run wide;
The roots run deep,
And still I seek my past
As me.

The names are there as
Forbears to tell of legacy me heir;
I seek to find my future way
By searching my past each passing day —
By searching to understand my past
And find my ancestral place in history
To last.

Nobody is better than anybody else,
Because we are blood;
Nobody is better than anybody else,
Because we are from the same seed or seeds;
We may differ in our talents and predispositions,
But we are same and one and family.

FAMILY REUNION

A PRAYER TO ANCESTRAL SPIRITS

Hear me, and help me;
Help me ole spirits before –
To live up to your life
Continued in me;
To do all I can when I can.

Hear me dear spirits of yore;
Beg me now you bless me more;
And if I die before my deeds be done;
Bless my children or descendants
To complete work undone.

FAMILY REUNION

THANKS TO PARENTS AND ANCESTORS

Posthumously, I thank my parents for their good
Contributions to me of genes and spirit;
For I am much of them plus that of their and our
Ancestors before –
My ancestral lights are lights of past lives now passed
Through me as the torch that burns brightly within me –
And now shines brightly for others to see;
Again, I thank my parents and other ancestors before
As God's gifts to me and as my source of gifts to others.

SYMPATHY OR CONDOLENCES

LOSS

To lose is to have had;
One cannot lose a loved one
Without falling in love,
Or lose a spouse without the experience
Of marriage, or a child without
The creation or adoption of life.

We can lose one's presence,
But never the images of or
Experiences with that one;
We can lose a loved one's presence,
But not our memories of that one —
Not until we lose ourselves.

To lose is to have had;
To lose is still to have.

SYMPATHY OR CONDOLENCES

MEANING OF LIFE AND DEATH

To live is to say "Hello,"
To die is to say "Good-bye";

We don't know how long we will have
 To say "Hello,"
We don't know when we may have
 To say "Good-bye";

So, while here on Earth,
 Be the best guest that you can;
And your company will be forever
 Appreciated.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (1985, 2004). *Poems on love and life* (2nd ed.).

SYMPATHY OR CONDOLENCES

LOSS OF A CHILD

The loss of a child's presence
Cannot be replaced,
Cannot be forgotten,
Cannot be forgiven.

The loss of a child, whether in death
Or separation, is a loss of innocence,
Hope, spontaneity, truthfulness, cuteness,
And joy;
The loss of a child is a loss of part of
Oneself.

The loss, whether permanent or temporary,
Is piercing to the heart; a wound that never
Heals in full and a pain that comes and goes.

Nevertheless, a joy known is a joy appreciated,
But a joy known is difficult to unknow;
A joy known is a joy enjoyed, though pleasant
Memories remind us of absence.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (1985, 2004). *Poems on love and life* (2nd ed.).

SYMPATHY OR CONDOLENCES

LIFE IS A ROSE

As a rose, life sprouts from fertile soil,
And as a bud, it opens to the challenges
Of its world,
Bathing in the rain and soaking
Its pores in the sun –
Like roses, some lives bloom,
Each unique in its form and path;
And as a rose, life's petals fall with time's ending;
Death's call from beauty's youthful leaves;
Images in one's mind to be savored.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2005). *Spiritual teacher speaks*.

SYMPATHY OR CONDOLENCES

CONDOLENCES

You filled our hearts, and
There you will stay;
You lifted our lives,
On each and every day;
You departed our world,
Just the other day;

Now you remain, I can say
Forever in our memories to
Stay;
Now, you remain
In our future fears unknown;
Now, you remain
In sorrow of the tears
That we've borne.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2012). *Tributes*.

RETIREMENT OR AWARDS CEREMONY

VALEDICTION

Farewell or good-bye,
Forever or for a day;
Look we must in eyes we may
Never see again;
Embrace we should of shared pains
And joys, and of an image removed.

Farewell or good-bye,
Forever or for a day;
In the midst of thoughts and words
Of apology, regret, good wishes, and
Opportunities missed.

Farewell or good-bye,
Forever or for a day;
With thoughts gone unshared,
With feelings gone unbared.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *Transitions in life and to death*.

RETIREMENT OR AWARDS CEREMONY

THANKS TODAY

In case I am not here tomorrow,
I say thanks today;
Thanks for good family, friendships,
And all kindness to me;
Thanks for well-wishers and supporters
Along my path;
Thanks for life's beauties of land, sea,
And air;
Thanks for the many smiles, encouraging
Words, and helping hands;
Thanks for all gifts and expressions of
Love;
Thanks for the divine grace and
Benevolent spirits that watch over me;
In case I am not able to be here tomorrow,
I say thanks today.

RETIREMENT OR AWARDS CEREMONY TO MY DEAR STUDENTS

If I have unfairly asked too much of you,
If I have unfairly asked you to ask too much
Of yourself, then I am sorry; but
If I have fairly asked you to ask much of yourself;
If I have fairly asked much of you so as to bring
The best of light and gift from you to bear –
Then I have no apology, and I ask nothing of
You except to make the effort and to know that
You have done the best that you can do at this time
In your life.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2009). *Time and timing*.

RETIREMENT OR AWARDS CEREMONY TO THE GRADUATE

Today, you feel special;
Today, you are special;
Today, you celebrate with those
Who helped you to accomplish this
Honor of being a graduate;
Let your family rejoice and be
Proud and happy with you;
Let your school or college rejoice
For shaping and training you
To go forth and be worthy to
Yourself and others;
Rejoice within yourself; be happy
And proud, because you did it with
Responsibility, good effort, and
Determination;
Rejoice now and fret not in the face
Of future challenges;
Rather go forth and remember two
Lessons of life; the lessons of
Continued growth and giving.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2009). *Time and timing*.

DIVORCE OR LOST RELATIONSHIP

DIVORCE

Pain from love's death, unlike that from the
Death of a love one; pain from love's death,
A prolonged pain that goes not away with buried
Tears of time; images recalled from the candles'
Glow of a wedding cake's reflection and the warmth
Of a child's eye from a shared creation; love astray
In smithereens of shattered glass; a crushed crystal
Of life's love's image blown off course by time's
Changes.

Loss of affection, physical separation, and divorce;
A cruel turn of events of lost love and loyalty;
A rare admixture of compassion, care, indifference
And hatred; a cauldron of a million reflective
Thoughts, driven by repeated pain that sucks the
Blood of past investments in contributions of time
And energy; sacrifices of sleep and eat and conscious
Hopes for sweet revenge in defense of hurt feelings
For the sake of nothing but self-content.

Loss of affection, physical separation, and divorce;
Smiles turned to frowns, promises to naught, and
Pleasures to pain; yesterday's toast of wine glasses
Broken and cut and wet all over, and love's honey
Turned vinegar sour to wine's wasted mess among
Hopes scribbled on a white table cloth.

Loss of affection, physical separation, and divorce;
Doubts about identity, trust, and self-pride;
Love still, love nil—confused thoughts and hopes of
Minds now vetoed by twisted hearts.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2003). *Love poems of Frederick Douglas Harper*.

DIVORCE OR LOST RELATIONSHIP TO SAY "HELLO" IS TO SAY "GOOD-BYE"

To say "hello" is to say "good-bye,"
For that's the orderly way in which things are;
Faces appear in winter to be lost in spring,
Doors open to be closed,
The sun rises and sets,
Babies come and old folks die,
And all people must laugh and cry;

Night naturally follows day,
As moon the sun;
Boredom steals from life's excitement,
As hatred from love's promise;

Say "hello" with enjoyment, excitement,
And appreciation;
Say "good-bye" without anger, grief, or sorrow;

To say "hello" is to say "good-bye,"
Remember, that's just the way things are.

**POEMS FOR
SPECIAL
MOMENTS AND
NEEDS**

SPIRITUALITY WITH FORGIVENESS

FORGIVENESS

Forgive if you can,
Another or yourself;
For forgiveness cleanses
The heart and the soul.

Forgive if you can,
Another or yourself;
For forgiveness lessens
The anger and hatred that
Eats at your core and being.

Forgive if you can,
Another or yourself;
For forgiveness absolves
You of negative thoughts
And feelings,
And frees your spirit
To give and love.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (1988). *Romantica: On Peace and Romance*.

SPIRITUALITY WITH FORGIVENESS

A PRAYER OF FORGIVENESS

O h God,
As we sit here as one,
Bless this our family and its members –
To relieve the burden from our hearts,
To relieve the hurt
That pains and separates us;

Lift our tension,
To be replaced by calm and peace;
Come so serenely
Into each and all of our hearts,
And breathe forgiveness
Of another and each other;

Teach us to speak of kindness, and
To disdain evil thoughts forever;
Be with us and around us –
Blessing us as one,
Blessing us as a family
From day to day.

AMEN.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2003). *God's gifts: Spiritual writings*.

SPIRITUALITY WITH FORGIVENESS

THOUGHTS ON SPIRITUALITY

(ORIGINAL QUOTATIONS OF THE AUTHOR)

**The Following Thoughts Are from the Following
Books
By Frederick Douglas Harper:**

God's Gifts: Spiritual Writings
Poems on Love and Life
Spiritual Teacher Speaks
Time and Timing

Time is truth; everything else is insignificant.

««««

Since we often cannot hide the truth, it may be good policy to admit it or to say nothing.

««««

We tend to choose our past by determining our future; and those misfortunes we did not or could not control, we should try and simply forget or ignore.

««««

When you create something good, some people want to use it; when you do something that is good, some people want to use you.

««««

Pray with your thoughts and deeds.

««««

The loss is greatest when the hope is highest.

««««

Those who allow themselves to be pulled by God's destiny's force, themselves, become a pushing force for positive changes in others.

««««

God exists because we exist as a miracle of His creation.

««««

To handle loss, one must first understand that he or she cannot own.

««««

The essence of religion is appreciation for that which we know and faith in and respect for that which we do not know.

««««

There are those who are chosen and those who choose themselves.

««««

We very often long for that we leave.

««««

A woman is God's most sacred trustee and temple of life.

««««

If the word of man or woman is truly moved and enacted by the spirit of God, then it is God Who speaks.

««««

Evil forces are sometimes more cohesive than forces of good, because often the main motive of evil forces is greed.

««««

If we cannot live right as "human beings," we will surely and prematurely die as a species.

««««

As a way of life, we should always carry our religion in our heart, and our prayers we should always carry in our thoughts.

««««

The perpetuity of love should be every day, all day, more and more, and in every way.

««««

God only guaranteed life; the rest is up to you.

««««

People who have nothing for which to look forward, very often spend much time looking backwards.

««««

You cannot take away a shared time or a shared experience; you cannot take away a pleasant memory of love.

««««

Among all things of value, one should try to be true to oneself and true to one's purpose and mission.

««««

Live not necessarily according to the laws and mandates of humankind but to your own good conscience, because to know right is naturally to do the right thing.

««««

Make time to be with yourself in order to meditate on your life's purpose, role, meaning, and priorities. Listen to yourself above all others.

««««

We cannot change our memories of the past, but certainly we can shape future memories through shaping our future experiences. We cannot change our memories of the past, but sometimes we can change our perceptions about these memories.

««««

The stars, the planets, the ocean, the flowers, the animals, and all the creations of beauty and great wonder bear witness to the grace and the presence of God.

««««

Some persons would rather be right than do right.

««««

By example, teach your children the way of right, and trust that they will find the path of goodness, growth, fairness, and nondestructiveness.

««««

It's not how far you get off course but how soon you get back on the right path.

««««

Boys need men in order to learn how to become men. Boys need men in order to keep from attempting to be men before their time.

««««

We may sometimes have to part from that we love because of a greater love for ourselves, or because of a greater love for God's purpose.

««««

For those things we cannot figure out, we must simply accept.

««««

Don't talk too quickly to one who is deep in thought, because that person may very well be talking to oneself.

««««

The greatest love is the sacrifice or sharing of self for the happiness, welfare, and growth of another human being. It *is not* selfish gratification from the neglect or misuse of another human being.

««««

The Great Spirit and the spirits of your ancestors will shine on you for being the natural you that you are destined to be.

««««

With every blessed success, it is wise to keep your feet on the ground, but not in the mud.

««««

We should at least try to do all the good that we can in this life, regardless of challenges and distractions.

««««

It is often useful to listen to advice of others, but, in many good cases, we must follow our own minds and hearts.

««««

We all have a script written for us; that is, if we only follow it—if we only follow our hearts and God's angelic spirits as our guides.

««««

The purpose of human-made science, so it seems, is to destroy Earth's life while attempting to save it.

««««

I sometimes wonder how I will die; but even more, in my wondering, is how I should live.

««««

The simplest purpose of life is to survive and to recreate life.

««««

Unfortunately, some persons don't marry the one they love, and some don't love the one they marry.

««««

One of the greatest gifts is the gift of one's time to another.

««««

There is no end at the end of a chapter, which is really the beginning, because endings almost always lead to some type of beginning or rebirth.

««««

Sometimes, while we are thinking about whether something is worthy of having, someone else gets what we are thinking about while we are thinking.

««««

There are those who talk too much and too long about nothing.

««««

When you can't control the situation, you have to try to control the impulse.

««««

There are those who live for a good cause, and those who take advantage of a good cause.

««««

Man can plant a tree, but only woman can bear its fruit.

««««

It's good to be good, but it's better to be better.

««««

Try to give for the gift of giving, and try to receive in the spirit of appreciation.

««««

We should help each other, and by helping each other, we help ourselves.

««««

The purpose of destiny's glow is to stay in the light and flow.

««««

Often people who do not demand respect are those who do not deserve it.

««««

It is not so much a time to attack evil as much as it is a time in which we must promote compassion, right, and good.

««««

Power rests within itself and within us. It is to be used and not abused.

««««

There are few blessings without the burdens of responsibility, jealousy, and tests of patience and tolerance.

««««

We acquire eventually to give and not to keep.

««««

Try to judge people by their relationship to you and others, and not by what others say about them to you.

««««

Those who follow on their knees, may one day find it difficult to lead on their feet.

««««

If you're going to be uncomfortable, then don't do it; and, if you're going to do it, then don't be uncomfortable.

««««

You cannot train a gift of talent from God; you can only enhance and express it.

««««

Some people seem not to like people nearly as much as they need them.

««««

Those who give much, tend to get back more, and those who try to get or keep too much, often lose what they've been blessed to acquire.

««««

Pain makes us philosophical about purpose and essence; wherein pleasure makes us comfortable with our own selfishness and anonymity.

««««

Our ability to raise the right questions is much more important than our intelligence to discover answers.

««««

If somebody is going to hell, you don't have to go with them – although you may have gone part of the trip.

««««

If you continue to be good to yourself, life will be good to you.

««««

May God continue to shine upon you, and may you continue to walk in His light.

««««

In our thoughts, dreams, and choices, we can always be free.

««««

It is not so important what people tell you, but, even more, what they *do not* tell you as well as what they ask you.

««««

I should always try and remember to take no real credit except to carry out the God-given destiny within me and to realize the gifts blessed upon me.

««««

You cannot help a person without being helped by that experience; you cannot willingly hurt a person without being hurt yourself.

««««

Let us forgive those who are capable of forgiveness and let us love those who are capable of love.

««««

It is time for people to stop talking about differences and to start helping people regardless of their differences.

««««

Good things usually come to the destined ones who are on a path for His goodness.

««««

I believe in “doing good” for no other reason than its effect.

««««

At least two things are bad for the stomach: eating too much and eating too often.

««««

Two of our urgent goals as human beings should be to save the human species from extinction and to enhance the human condition.

««««

You can't get the spirit unless you seek the spirit; you can't seek the spirit unless you let it come within you.

««««

If we are fortunate to be fortunate, we should help the unfortunate, that is, as long as we are not misfortuned by the unfortunate in doing so.

««««

We are often so busy putting out brush fires, we do not have time left to plant a tree.

««««

The seeds of truth blow not far from the tree.

««««

Patience indeed is virtuous, that is, when it is not foolish.

««««

Of course, human beings are not supposed to be perfect, but we can be better. We can either use pain that we experience to become better, or we can allow that pain to make us worse and less than we were.

««««

If one wants to kill you for disagreeing with his or her religion, then that person is not religious.

««««

God created each of us as a unique gift to the world, and what we each do while we are here on Earth is, itself, a gift from God.

««««

The world is not simple anymore, so we have to simplify it for ourselves.

««««

We should love life, for life is God and all sacred energy within.

««««

Special things are few, and special moments are often brief.

««««

If we are special, then let us be special—let us act in a special way.

««««

A not-so-good feeling is to know that God's gift of a talent is trapped in you, and that you cannot develop that talent or get people around you to appreciate it.

««««

Many a people tend to hate that they don't understand and to want that they have not had.

««««

Hope and pray for the best and do your best, and the rest will take care of itself.

««««

Hope without action is futile thought.

««««

A purpose of our spiritual life is to free God's spirit within us in order to move the good spirit within others.

««««

By helping another, we help ourselves as two.

««««

You can't come aboard and wreck a ship without the risk of drowning yourself.

««««

Where there is success, there is likely to be sorrow. Where there are blessings, one is likely to have to carry the burden of such good fortunes.

««««

Many a talented Bourgeois very often dream and talk of doing much in a lifetime, but tend to do one thing; that is, to maintain a style of life to which they have become accustomed.

««««

We must work on helping people after our death; only then will our spirit live in kindness and perpetuity.

««««

People surely should take an interest in other things besides themselves.

««««

There are people who watch things happen, there are others who let things happen, and there are those who make things happen.

««««

You find happiness wherever it is, and you embrace it; you trust in it.

««««

If you find out who you are and accept who you are, then you can become all you can be.

««««

Those who should be happy for you can very often be jealous against you.

««««

Every good thing we are and become, we owe to God and His helping angels and spirits along our way. The only credit we can rightfully claim is that of being willing to listen and follow through with the divine script in trying to become and do all we can.

««««

The more we are blessed, the greater the burden and challenges that accompany our joys; because blessings are not without the

price of intermittent setbacks, frustrations, disappointments, and pain.

««««

Persons who acquire a large sum of money all at once, should first cry, then keep their mouth shut and pray, and finally hide; that is, before deciding how to use it wisely.

««««

Those who deserve better should not seek nor settle for less.

««««

Those who try to do good things can sometimes be criticized for their efforts, while those who choose to do nothing are often simply ignored.

««««

It is not wise to think something is “one thing,” but to know in our hearts that it is quite “another.”

««««

All spiritual writings cannot be found in one book, and all spiritual teachings cannot necessarily come from one person.

««««

Some people are at a dead-end street and are afraid to make a U-turn or exit.

««««

Keep working through sunshine and storms, and continue to smile—knowing that your purpose is simply to grow and give back.

««««

Persons who are afraid of losing love will often not seek to gain it.

««««

There are the careless ones and there are those who do not care. Even more, there are the careless who do not care. For these, lack of care is surely mathematically squared.

««««

Continue to grow and work hard, and you will get where God intended for you to be.

««««

We can often become victims of that we criticize.

««««

There are those who dig a hole deeper and deeper for themselves instead of filling in a small hole and starting to build a mountain.

««««

Sensual pleasure is something that lasts for a moment, romance often lasts for a season; but true love endures for a lifetime or more.

««««

An alternative to being suspicious about good is that of being appreciative of good.

««««

Always look forward into the light and not backwards into darkness.

««««

We frequently admire in others the things we cannot do or the things we are afraid to do.

««««

The human body can be disabled but not necessarily the human spirit.

««««

People don't just grow old; they allow themselves to get old.

««««

Dying becomes less dreadful to those who have chosen to live.

««««

Living on a farm does not make you a farmer, and going to church regularly does not necessarily make you a saint.

««««

People will often act human if they feel they can.

««««

When you motivate others, you are, in turn, motivated by what they do.

««««

A gift that is well appreciated by the receiver is, in itself, a gift to the giver.

««««

Remember and appreciate what you have been blessed to have, instead of being obsessed with that you have lost or not yet gained.

««««

I remain amazed at the work that has to be done on Earth, but I am equally amazed by how some people stand or sit around doing nothing.

««««

You don't have to know how to play the game in order to know it is being played on you. But if you participate with the game player, certainly, you stand a chance to lose in the process.

««««

Every person is an opportunity; that is, an opportunity to be helped and an opportunity to help.

««««

Human behavior can vary across settings and time, although basic traits are surely constant and many times predictable.

««««

If you shine, then the light will reflect to you in the smiles and joys of others.

««««

Those who make a positive difference will often benefit from it.

««««

People who take responsibility and leadership, very often find little time to complain.

««««

In order to give and forgive, one must first open up the mind and the heart.

««««

There is a tendency of those who knew us "when" to continue to see us as then.

««««

Butterflies are born to fly; it often matters not where or why.

««««

To know what is right is not necessarily to do what is right, but it helps to know.

««««

If we know who we are, then we don't have to try to be.

««««

Every conversation is an opportunity for the good we can do.

««««

Give some people an education, and they will often use it to avoid work.

««««

Beyond sensual love is spiritual love; a love of knowing without knowledge, touching without hands, and being without trying.

««««

If a ship does not sink, it will inevitably continue to float; and if it floats, then there is hope.

««««

Don't douse pain with pleasure, but, rather, allow pain to come to you on its own terms and time, and, thus, it will cleanse your soul, purify your heart, and eventually lift your spirit.

««««

Your status, high or low, does not make you right or wrong; it is usually your action.

««««

As regard to retirement from a job, there is never a good time in which to leave, but there is always a good time in which to have to leave.

««««

Selfishness and righteousness should not occupy the same breath or the same space.

««««

Confused sheep will often follow any shepherd.

««««

At times, someone has to take charge in moving the ship ahead or putting the ship back on course.

««««

There are people who worship other people, when they often think they are worshipping God.

««««

A great power within any one person is to know and to realize such.

««««

Divine knowledge comes without effort; it is simply observed and accepted.

««««

God is Divine in using people or a person, at times, to get others to do what needs to be done.

««««

Although educable, human beings are among the most difficult animals to train.

««««

God cannot necessarily come into your heart, but certainly the spirit of God can come into a heart that is ready to receive.

««««

A man who loved a woman before, should, once she is pregnant, love her even more.

««««

We don't necessarily need to reinvent the wheel; often we just need to make it roll.

««««

There will always be lies, but let them fall harmlessly upon the shield of truth and the sword of virtue.

««««

In one's brief lifetime, there is too much work to take time to dwell on the negative, and, certainly, too little time to criticize the insignificant.

««««

Certainly, we can never repay the immense debt to all those who nurtured our growth, but we can help somebody as we were helped in our lives.

««««

No social group has a premium on indolence; it can be found at all social levels and among all cultural groups.

««««

It is bad to fight with another, but it is even worse to be at war with oneself.

««««

God helps those who help others, and we can very often help others when we help ourselves.

««««

There are those who love most those things that will kill them quickest.

««««

People who do absolutely nothing, often stretch the value of zero.

««««

Some people love to see their names and faces in the spotlight,
but they very often do not want to perform.

««««

The soul and spirit are certainly worth more than the image.

««««

It's difficult for human beings to hear through emotions of
anxiety, fear, grief, pain, and anger.

««««

To want to be bigger than God and to want to be accepted as a
God are two of the most selfish things one can do, because God is
all and one person simply cannot be all.

««««

We are often so busy assessing what's wrong with a person, we
very often fail to see what's right with that person. We are often
so busy looking for differences between a person and ourselves;
we very often fail to see the similarities.

««««

Death is not necessarily an ending; it's likely to be another
beginning in life's energy cycle.

««««

It's always good to be flexible; as long as one does not break, as
long as one does not shamefully genuflect.

««««

Personal growth can simply be defined as the forward progress
from where we were and who we were.

««««

Go always in peace and let the least of you be helped by the most
fortunate of you.

««««

Giving and receiving love is the essence of God's spirit.

««««

Most human beings have the vulnerability to be corrupted. All
that is needed is the right opportunity. Most human beings have
the inclination to be good and do right. Likewise, all that is needed
is the right opportunity.

««««

Some people have nothing important which they choose to do,
so they choose the constancy of trying to make a positive number
negative, that is, trying to make good people look bad.

««««

Neither love nor anger can flourish in a vacuum.

««««

The truth often rests between two stories of opposing viewpoints, or it simply rests within the mind of the observer.

««««

It is not always the value of the gift that matters, but, more so, it is the sacrifice of the giver to give the gift.

««««

We never know our power until we have to use it; and, sometimes, we never know our power until we lose it.

««««

One who inherits the house is certainly responsible for cleaning it.

««««

We give our best to the best in order to avoid their being less than they could become.

««««

If in emotional pain, it is often best to avoid bad thoughts and avoid doing bad things.

««««

Sometimes, our own pain is so great, it seems, that we do not hear or feel the pain of another.

««««

Every day is a curtain call, and we have to play well our role of living.

««««

We should not live to win wars, but, if anything, to win battles. And if we have to retreat, we should. And if we have to stand on the sideline and not fight a given cause, then we should – because, at times, wisdom is a greater virtue than courage.

««««

A good sensation lasts but a moment; however, a good thought can last a lifetime or more.

««««

One should be defined less by position in life, but more by his or her work in life or work during a lifetime.

««««

If we speak truth, we can often defy those we know best. If we do not speak out of truth, we can very often defy the very principles inculcated within the marrow of our bones.

««««

Many can provide ideas, but few among these are willing to or capable of carrying them out.

««««

We cannot change the past, but we can change our perceptions of it.

««««

Sometimes, it seems there are so many people who are unhappy, that it is hard to find someone with whom to share one's happiness.

««««

Everyone has a God-given gift or talent. Each must realize what it is, develop it, and then share the fruits of it with others. Failure of either of these is a loss of the most serious magnitude.

««««

One purpose of a parent is to protect the life of the young – even if it is with one's own life, because the future life of a child is one's life continued; it is God's life continued.

««««

Those who do difficult things by choice will find difficult things less difficult to do.

««««

People who victimize others often self-exonerate by blaming their victims.

««««

Teach a child to do what he or she can do as a child, and that child will do what he or she must do as an adult.

««««

Those who work hard for the purpose of good, at times, must live with two challenges: negative criticism and lack of appreciation.

««««

Life's worth tends to rest primarily with one's achievements in life and one's contributions to the life of others.

««««

Some things are meant to be, but not necessarily meant to last.

««««

To avoid pain, one has to avoid the stimulus that causes pain; nonetheless, some pain is necessary for security and growth.

««««

Pain sometimes needs to run its course; trying to numb it with drugs or cover it with pleasure is not an answer, because pain many times has a spiritual purpose of fostering renewable faith and wisdom.

««««

Some human beings spend a lifetime fooling and deceiving others, but, in the end, they find they have really fooled themselves.

««««

The further away we get from our natural way and state as human beings, the closer we will get to our death as a species.

««««

No nation at continuous war against itself can prosper.

««««

Where there is one, there is likely to be two, and where there are two there is likely to be many. If an event occurs once, it is likely to occur many times over, in many forms and variations, and in many places. Only God is one, all, and ubiquitous.

««««

Seek spiritual wisdom and allow spiritual words to sustain you, lift you, and give you solace in days and years to come.

««««

There is much obligation and responsibility to those who are allowed to survive by the will and grace of God.

««««

Many times, it's lonely at the top and at the end of life, but it doesn't have to be.

««««

In aging, the key is to do it naturally, peacefully, healthily, and gracefully while functioning within one's own limits.

««««

Death of a loved one brings out grief and sometimes it brings out greed.

««««

Some people worry themselves much, and, by doing so, they tend to worry those who are around them.

««««

If you hate yourself, you are likely to destroy yourself. If you destroy yourself, you will likely hate yourself even more. If you cease to be angry, you can possibly begin to love and accept yourself.

««««

There are those who do a dance and sing a song to acquire your help, and, afterwards, you don't hear from them until their next performance.

««««

If you have peace and joy, relish in it and spread it to others; if you have pain, try to absorb it, flow with it, and tolerate it with time's passing.

««««

True friendship takes time, but, nowadays, people seldom find time for themselves, not to mention time for another.

««««

Some people very often brag that they can do something better than someone else, especially when they actually don't have to do it.

««««

Persons should strive to live in the light of the Greatest Spirit, because worship at a temple or church, *only*, "is not enough."

««««

If we continue to be so disrespectful to all life and ourselves and so destructive to natural things and ways, then death as a species will be a destiny that is earned but one that will not be necessarily deserved.

««««

Truly spiritual persons have a purpose in life other than themselves.

««««

These days, it seems there are so many things from which to choose, that we barely know what to choose to do with ourselves and our lives.

««««

The spirit of goodness and purpose can come through many different media; therefore, it's important to pay attention to the message and not the credibility or status of the messenger.

««««

While corners of the world undergo pain, there are those of power and those of wealth who sit and pontificate in a corner of obscurity and self-indulgence, that is, while in a position to help.

««««

Often I think that I should count my blessings and good fortunes, but then I realize that I cannot, simply because they are too numerous.

««««

It is easy to find criticism, that is, when you choose not to like a person.

««««

Pain and misfortune are blessings if they serve to strengthen the soul and the spirit, that is, when they do not serve to destroy faith and will.

««««

Religious leaders can be trained; however, true spiritual leaders are born of good deed and purpose. Nonetheless, religious leaders can be true spiritual leaders anointed by God's good spirit.

««««

Sameness and repeated exposure can lessen appreciation; these can also, in many cases, enhance appreciation.

««««

Everything claimed is not always earned, and everything earned is not worthy of claim.

««««

A person who is destined to shine cannot be kept in the dark.

««««

We cannot always write life's script as we think it should be, because God's spirit of hand is divine.

FEAR AND COURAGE

OUR GREATEST FEARS

Our greatest fears as human beings are:

Not the fear of being unable to find love,
But, rather, the fear of not being able to
Recognize and accept found love;

Not the fear of failing or not succeeding,
But rather the fear of not being willing to try
Or to accept opportunity for success;

Not the fear of death, but rather the fear
Of life with its daily challenges and
Rejections;

Not the fear of achieving to society's
Standards or expectations,
But rather a fear of living up to our own
Personal talents and expectations;

Not the fear of being that self as defined by
Others, but rather the fear of being that self
That we are destined to be or wish to be.

FEAR AND COURAGE

SUFFERING CAN BE A BLESSING

Suffering can hone our strength and bring insight to
A new way of seeing ourselves and the world,
A new way of learning spiritual sacrifice and giving,
A new way of finding our purpose or mission in life;
Yes, you have a right to suffer, so don't be afraid of
Self-imposed pain and denial for your growth and purity;
Pain often resides in the mind as we perceive it;
As human beings, you will suffer, as we all do –
From life's imposed and exposed pains of time;
Pain is necessary for growth, and it is par for life's course;
From painful misfortune can certainly come fortune;
From suffering can come beauty and creation;
From the pain of childbirth, can come the beauty of
God's life;
From exercise and hard work, can come health and
Self-pride;
From grief and its loss can come rebirth and love anew;
No human is free from life's pain and suffering,
So cork your fear and complaint of such –
Stop thinking selfishly about what you don't have,
And start thinking appreciatively about what you do have;
Stop thinking selfishly about what you cannot do,
And think daily about what you have been blessed to do;
Get on with the beautiful day that you can create;
Get on with the beautiful life that you can create.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2008). *Beyond fear*.

FEAR AND COURAGE

FREE YOUR MIND

There's nothing like a freed mind;
There's nothing like a mind that is free;
There's nothing like a freed mind –
A mind that has been freed from the
Shackles of public opinion and expectation,
Freed from beliefs learned in childhood,
Freed from the clutter of the day and time –
Of common-day minutia as meaningless
Pastimes;
Freed from pain of times past;
Freed from inhibitions that imprison
And bind the body and thoughts;

Free your mind –
Liberate it of vices and addictive ways;
Liberate yourself from self-imposed
Tension of stress and worry –
From family-learned beliefs and parental
Expectations and demands;
Free your mind –
From the disrespect and abandoned love
Of those who don't care about you
Or for you – free your mind *now*.

FEAR AND COURAGE

LONELINESS AS COMPANION

By choice or circumstance, at times you
May be alone or feel alone;
When company has not come or been
Sent your way, or when you have not chosen
To accept the company that chooses to stay,
Then embrace the quiet of the day;

In your intimate and silent space, find solitude
And a cleansing that are Divine in their essence;
Wait and listen for a message of spirit
To come into your heart and prepare you
For a mission of life or a message of the day;
Wait and listen for a message of goodness
And right for you;

Let silence and solitude in God's presence
Be your friend, companion, and guide.

FEAR AND COURAGE

DON'T DIE ANGRY

Don't die angry, if you can help it:

Say to yourself,
"I will not die angry with another or
Others or myself;
I will not refuse to forgive others or
Myself";

Say to yourself,
"I will free others from the bondage of
Hurtful words of the past;
I will free others from my expectations
And unreasonable isolation and abandonment";

Free your soul,
Free your spirit,
Free your heart, and
Free your mind – if you can;
Die in peace; die with peace toward
Others.

FEAR AND COURAGE

WHAT COLOR ARE YOU?

Are you blue; calm, just, fair, and balanced?
Are you red; often fiery, spicy, and angered?
Are you pink; hot, impulsive, and sensual?
Are you brown; low-keyed, matter-of-factly, and
Often unmoved?
Are you green; vibrant, lively, and optimistic?
Are you black; often gloomy, energyless, and depressed?
Are you yellow; easygoing, accommodating, but often
Anxious and fearful?
Are you purple; sometimes bitter, sometimes resentful,
And often determined?
Are you gray; directional, ambitious, and authoritative?
Are you white; obsessed with purity, cleanliness, order,
And morality?
Or, are you a rainbow;
Or, a combination of colors of varying luminance;
Or, are you one color that changes in its shade or hue?
What color are you?
What colors are you?
What mood or moods are you?
Know your color, know yourself.

ROMANCE

WILL YOU COME WITH ME?

I have sought your image
Without knowledge of your existence,
My ideal woman you are;
So come with me please—
Be with me and share your life;

Create life we will, and together
We'll be trustees of another;
Come with me and I will pick a red hibiscus
For your hair and the sweet magnolia flower
As your perfume's fragrance;

I'll promise nothing except to be with you
And be for you as long as we live
Under the watchful eyes of the stars.

ROMANCE

WILL YOU LOVE ME IF . . . ?

Will you love me if I'm not,
Or will you just love me if I am;
Will you love me if I should have,
Or will you just love me if I do?

Will you love me if I fail or if
I diminish size in your eyes,
Or will you just love me as I was;
Will you love me if I'm paralyzed,
Damaged, lessened, or embarrassing;
Or will you just love me no more?

Will you love me if I change;
Will you love me if I am changed —
Changed from your ideal of the lovable;
Will you love me if . . . ?

ROMANCE

A LOVE TO WALK WITH ME

And he said,
“In my transition from a love lost,
I need a woman to walk
Behind me to encourage me to
Become all I can;
I need a woman to walk
Beside me when I’m honored
For what she has helped me to
Become;
And, certainly, I need a woman
To walk *ahead* of me,
As I help her to become
All that she can become.
I simply need and pray for a
Good woman to walk God’s path in love
With me and me with her.”

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2003). *Love poems of Frederick Douglas Harper*.

ROMANCE

LOVE OF WOMAN

If one loves woman,
It should not be about her
Sensuality alone;
It should also be about her spirit,
About her essence, and
About her manner —
Because woman is
The holy grail of Divine offering
As spirit and body to recreate
Divine life.

ROMANCE

POETIC LETTER TO MY LOVE

If I never see you again,
Remember our good times
Together;
If I must go today or tomorrow,
Remember my love for you
And things we shared;
I have not deferred your call
In times of need;
I have not promised the
Unfulfillable;
If it is God's will that I not
See you again in this world,
Just remember:
I loved you then,
I love you now, and
I will love you forever.

ROMANCE

LOVE AGAIN

Yes, as you fell in love once,
You so can again, and with
Greater feeling and care;
Burn the bush of past pains,
But not the roots of pleasure and
Learned memories;
If you open your heart and cap grief,
You can love again with belief;
As long as you breathe air and hold
The heat of romantic yearning,
You can love again;
You can love another;
As long as you love yourself.

PRAYERS FOR THE MOMENT

A MORNING PRAYER

I awake as a gift of Thee this day
And bow my head to humbly pray;
I thank You firstly for the sunrise bright
As well as the gift to share my light;
I beg of You this day to touch my soul,
To keep me healthy, safe, and whole;
Bless me yet to learn much more –
To give to others so abundantly poor.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2009). *Time and timing*.

PRAYERS FOR THE MOMENT

A NIGHTLY PRAYER

To the Divine Source, the Universal Spirit
Of all that is one, whole, and connected;
To my ancestral spirits of nigh and yore,
I pray this nightly prayer and plea:
Please bless me even more;
Keep me whole and healthy to do more
Good in my work and deeds as I should;
Bless me, even more, to live up to all
I can do in this Earthly lifetime with what
I have been given and blessed to be able to do;
Bless my children and their children
To do the same;
Deliver me from threats of destruction and
Distraction from day to day,
As I continue your destined path for me
Of growth and giving—
THANK YOU, now and forever.

PRAYERS FOR THE MOMENT

A HUMBLE PRAYER

My God, all praise to Thy Great Spirit and presence.
My God, all thanks for what I have experienced in Thy
Sacred space and time.
Let me continue to be in harmony with my energy;
Let the remaining course of my life run the divine
Destiny of good will;
Let my continual thoughts of Thy presence and creations
Be witness to my prayer;
Let my good deeds, wherever, be testimony to my faith;
From day to day, give me:
The patience to listen,
The wisdom to understand,
The unselfishness to defer my own needs,
The insight to realize my potential and purpose,
The will power to be growthful and productive,
The courage to face unknowns,
The thoughtfulness to give and humbly receive,
The capacity to love and be loved,
An openness to accept my human vulnerability,
A habit toward responsibility,
A penchant for hard work,
A respect for self and all that is sacred and good,
The strength to control destructive urges,
The ability to be modest in the face of good fortune,
And the propensity to be at peace with myself.
AMEN.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (1985, 2004). *Poems on love and life* (2nd ed.).

PRAYERS FOR THE MOMENT

A DAILY PRAYER

O h God, on each morning's wake,
Teach me to appreciate light's day;
And with each action of success and good,
Always remind me to do what I should;
 To keep my feet on the ground,
 My body and head sound,
 And my eyes on a purpose found;

To know always that You are everything
And that I am just one thing;
Great Sacred One of all, accept my daily
Thoughts of appreciation for Your blessings
Bestowed and a rededication to
 Your spirits' call;

Prevent me from hiding my talents in
Cowardice or basking too much in the
 Light of success;
Give me the strength to stay my pace
And journey Your race unknown but shown
By Your light and love from day to day.
 AMEN.

DESTINY

THE “WILL” DESTINED AND AFFORDED ME*

I have crossed the Rhine in spirit as
In near death – and, in doing so,
I have kissed the face of God and danced
With the presence of angels and ancestral spirits;
And yet I was spared more time on Earth
To do that “will” of God so destined and
Afforded me.

**This poem has reference to the poet’s near-death experience while swimming in the late summer of 1966 at the age of 23.*

DESTINY

ADVICE TO YOU MY CHILD

Be true to your eyes, ears, thoughts, and feelings;
Listen to your heart but yield to your mind's best
Judgment;
Be kind and wise in spoken words, for surely your
Words will follow you;
Be not afraid of risks but be cautious of actions
Driven by emotion, confusion, and false friends;
Avoid jealousy of others' achievements and possessions;
Don't live with an insatiable greed for more than
You can appreciate or use;
Don't eat more than your hunger's call or
Drink beyond your thirst's needs;
Listen to spirits that favor you and offend not
Those that oppose you;
Absorb yourself in an activity worthy of your unique
Talent, and develop as many common
Potentialities as you desire and can;
Whatever you do, do it as well as you can;
Live comfortably with your conscience,
And be at peace with your soul;
Be courageous in life, while always respecting
Death's luring and lurking;
Rest when tired and think when you are uncertain;
Be kind to the sacredness of life and respect the
Natural order of the universe;
Follow no one or no thing except your own judgment
And your own God's wish;
Love and respect yourself and your family;
Be all you can by developing yourself;
Do all you can in helping worthy others;
And live a quality and meaningful life.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (1985, 2004). *Poems on love and life* (2nd ed.).

DESTINY

I DARE YOU

I dare you to quit the darkness within you –
To allow your natural light to shine;
I dare you to quit the fear within yourself, and
To bring forth the courage to be you,
To be all that you can be and become;
I dare you to quit the negative thoughts and
Restructure your mind toward positive thoughts of
Change in you and your actions;
I dare you to be the real self that you are,
The identity that you were born and destined to be;
I dare you to summon the courage to love and not hate,
To forgive and not abandon, to give and not
Selfishly take;
I dare you to quit the indolence of doing little to
Nothing and to reach deep down within the
Reserves of your energy in order to work hard
And become the self that you can be;
I dare you to quit self-imposed and self-accepted pain
And allow the gift of joy and the spirit of
Life to come into your heart and to your daily living;
I dare you to believe in yourself and escape self-doubt
That drives misery and the doldrums of despair;
I dare you to raise your ambition and goals –
To become somebody of worth, esteem, respect, and
Accomplishment;

I dare you to raise yourself to become a star, a bright
Star in a galaxy of stars that twinkle and glitter;
I dare you to get up now and start anew in order to
Help yourself and thus help others.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *The light within us*.

DESTINY

THE WHITE LIGHT

LOVE, PEACE, AND JOY;
Let us strive for these —
Let us strive for these in our
Hearts, our thoughts, and our
Actions.

Let us strive for the
“White Light” here on Earth
Through peace in the world,
Joy in our hearts,
And love toward one another.

DESTINY

DARKNESS TO LIGHT

When it is dark in your life,
Simply light a match,
Light a candle,
Turn on a light,
Go outside to see and feel the sun.

When it is dark and cold in your life,
Seek a warm smile from another,
Seek a smile from within yourself,
Seek a light within your heart,
And engender a positive thought
From within your mind.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *The light within us*.

DESTINY

LIGHT A CANDLE; BECOME A LIGHTHOUSE

Light a candle within your soul;
Nurture that glow and allow it to grow;
Nurture the fire within you as spirit,
Your spirit of life to develop as your gift and
Purpose in giving and serving;
Start a lighthouse from a candle's light,
So effervescent to show the direction for those
Who will come to aid you or be aided by you;
Develop your beacon and show that light for
Ships both full and empty to come to your port—
People who will come to give to and receive
From you;

I ask of you to light a candle within you,
Deep down within your soul; light that candle
And open the door of your talent to light the
Spirit of others;
I beg of you to prepare yourself for a miracle
By allowing the miracle that is you to shine—
To shine oh so brightly, so brilliantly;
I dare you to relight a candle within and allow
The glow to light a room and light the world;
I pray of you to light a candle and become a
Lighthouse of shared talent, benevolent service,
Inspiration, love, and unselfish giving.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *The light within us*.

DESTINY

OF HUMAN FULFILLMENT

*And the Universal Spirit spoke to the heart through
thoughts of mind's open door:*

I will give you wisdom, but, at times, by way
Of challenges and hardship;

I will give you perseverance, but by way
Of a thorny forest of disappointments and pain;

I will give you strength, but with intermittent
Rest upon a hard rock of discomfort and fatigue;

I will give you joy at the peak of a mountain
Climbed or between intervals of hard work
And unrelenting toil;

I will give you happiness and fulfillment,
But by fiat of your own acceptance of
Choices and your own willful making.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *The light within us*.

LOSS

DEATH'S WINGS

Death sings such sweet passing as
Calm sets voyage beyond the sea,
And spirits rise with wings beyond the
Clouds, free from life's shell once we;
But ready I'm not for such day to come
For Her Divine work for me has yet to be
Done.

LOSS

FOR THE UNBORN

A thought, a prayer –
For a life unrealized;

A thought, a prayer –
For an arrow plucked in flight,
For a rosebud picked at dawn;

Talents gone unknown, and
Undeveloped images never to be
Appreciated;
A baby disowned and a child unknown,
A seed energized; a seed minimized
To dismemberment;

A thought, a prayer –
For a life unrealized,
For a life that is no more.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (1988). *Romantica: On Peace and Romance*.

TRANSITION

MOVE ON

(Transition: past to the future)

If abused and unappreciated,
You may feel suffering with
Pain, anger, sadness, and fear;
If you can't work it out, then move on;
You have a choice – the freedom
To act is yours;
Resolve the unhappiness within your mind,
With your other, or within your world;
Or simply find the will and strength to
Move on.

TRANSITION

TRANSITION TO A NEW DAY

I am blessed to awake
And transition *each day*
To a *new day*—
With God in my heart;
With God's thoughts
In my mind; and
With God's good work
In my waking intention.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *Transitions in life and to death*.

TRANSITION

EARTH'S TRANSITION

Time brings change,
Faster than ever before,
As Earth beneath the sun warms
To life's confusion and threat;

Ducks forget their routes,
Birds and butterflies their migrated
Homes of winter, and trees their seasons;

Humans laugh in meaningless emptiness
For the sake of unconscious defense against
Denied things to come: forewarned extinction
Or maybe nearly so;

Death galore comes nigh to garner grief
And to purify the souls of generations
Yet born.

POEMS FOR INSPIRATION

MOTIVATION

WE CAN: A MESSAGE TO HUMANKIND

We must believe in ourselves; and we must get others
To believe in themselves if we are to make a difference;
Whatever we want to do, let us do it now;
What we choose to do, let us do it well;
Let us build new bridges that will lead us to
 Destinies unforeseen.
We can do so much, to have done so little;
We can do anything, we can do everything –
 If we only believe:
We can run 150 miles nonstop,
We can catch a speeding bullet in our teeth,
We can leap the width of a flowing river,
We can climb the tallest building like a mountain,
We can stop our heartbeat by concentrating
 On a single thought,
We can die and come back to life.
We are human being, a phenomenal machine;
If we can do all these things,
We can help another person.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (1985, 2004). *Poems on love and life* (2nd ed.).

MOTIVATION

WHAT YOU CAN DO

What you can do
Is what you should do;
What you should do
Is what you must do;
What you must do
Is what you will do;
Do all you can to
Develop yourself;
And try to evoke good
In others and feel good
About it.

MOTIVATION

IF YOU CAN STAND

If you can stand at the precipice
Of success and not falter from
Setbacks, distractions, or your own
Arrogance,

If you can walk within the narrow
Interstice of a straight path of success
That is shown to and destined for you,

If you can develop spiritual gifts of
Talent within the marrow of your bones
And die without regret about lack of
Deeds done or talents developed,

If you can avoid being sucked
Up by the self-induced emotional drain and
Torture of your tormenting impulses
Or a once-welcomed pleasure now gone,

If you can stand alone naked in the group
While rocks of undeserved criticism plummet
You with lies and falsities that tarnish
A reputation built from years of toil, hardship,
And giving,

If you set sail to a path of growth and learning
And use such to help and give to others,
Then you can stand with souls of the Spirit
And spirits of the Soul that walk with and
Among us.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *Transitions in life and to death*.

MOTIVATION

GETTING GOD'S GIFT OUT OF YOU

Music was in Maria Callas, Leontyne Price,
And Marian Anderson,
Basketball was in Michael Jordan and Bill Russell;
Painting or creative expression was in Leonardo da Vinci and
Michelangelo;
Leadership of the masses was in Mohandas Gandhi
And Martin Luther King, Jr.;
Angelic service to the downtrodden was in
Mother Teresa and Helen Keller.

What's in you?
How and when, if so, will you answer your ancestral calling?
How and when, if so, will you answer God's calling?
How and when will you let your light shine for the world?

MOTIVATION

WAITING FOR NOTHING

Please, please, please –
My friend,
Don't stand there at the starting blocks
With an empty heart and worry on your mind,
Because no one yet has been carried to the finish line;
Accomplishment is yours, only if you put
Your head to it and your heart in it –
The body will follow;
Place your scope on the goal,
Set your hands to the dust,
And kick with all your might;
For victories will never come
By standing around waiting to be carried –
Standing around, "waiting for nothing."

FROM: Harper, F. D. (1985, 2004). *Poems on love and life* (2nd ed.).

MOTIVATION

DO YOU HAVE THE STRENGTH TO BE?

Do you have the strength
To be that self you really are –
Not to be influenced unduly
By the worlds of others?
Are you confident to follow your own mind's
Energy – to be, to act in accord
With your own interests and needs?

Don't fool yourself by your thoughts and words;
Look into my pen's eye and be truthful
To the self you really are.

Do you have the wisdom and courage
To do what you want to do,
To do what you must do –
Unfettered by false advice and biased notions?

Simply tell me, do you have the strength
To be?

WISDOM

CLASS

Don't gloat in victory, or pout in failure;
Don't brag of your conquests and possessions;
Be considerate to the less fortunate and
 Graceful with the defeated;
Suffer you must, but without a murmur of
 Complaint;
Choose well in your taste and avoid ostentation,
 Showmanship, and buffoonery;
Let your actions, achievements, and accompaniments
 Speak for you at the expense of your mouth;
Do and acquire what you like and not things
 You value highly for their impressions on others;
 And if they impress others, then let it be;
Stay in synch with your energy and mood,
 While remaining polite, respectful, and responsible;
Listen well to your conscience and follow
 The moral dictates of your natural way;
Although not perfect, try to do as many of these
 As often as you can and will;
If so, you will earn an air of distinction and class
 That birth, money, power, and status alone
 Cannot bestow.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2004). *Poems for young people*.

WISDOM

IMPORTANT THINGS IN LIFE

The most important TIME in your life is now;

The most important QUESTION in your life is,

“What are you going to do now and

In the future?”

The most important ACTION in your life is

Thinking;

The most important PERSON in your life is you.

Therefore, don't procrastinate;

Know what you are going to do,

Think things through,

And love yourself in order to love another.

WISDOM

FIVE GREAT GIFTS

And a prophet of the Great Spirit
Stepped forth to sing praise for
Five great gifts of life. And he
Spoke thus for each listener's
Heeding:

“**Share** of yourself with a special
Other,
Create new life from love with
Another,
Care for and nourish the young,
Develop your common and special
Talents fully, and
Share your talents with the
World.”

WISDOM

THE GREATEST GIFT

That greatest gift is the
Joy of a gift shared;
That giving of ourselves,
Our time,
Our encouragement,
Our resourcefulness.

That greatest gift is the giving
Of ourselves to a worthy other,
So that special one can enhance
The value and number of his or her
Gifts to the world.

So let us give and spread
Our love and joy by giving through
The gift of ourselves to another;
Let us be blessed by the satisfaction
Of giving so that we can receive
The greater gift of renewed fortune
To give once more of ourselves.

WISDOM

LOST TRAVELER

He often travels to meet many people,
Never likely to see again the eyes of
Faces unlikely again to see him.
Just recently, he traveled so and was lost
As to where he was;
When he asked a wise person as
To how to find his way;
She looked for the answer
Within his eyes;
And simply said:
“Wake up.”

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2004). *Poems for young people*.

WISDOM

RULES OF LIVING

Listen for your rules;
Listen for your inner voices and
Interpretive mind.

Listen to your body, listen to your “self”;
Sense your moods, your pains, your pleasures.

Listen to your others and learn;
But be watchful of faulty advice and poor
Example.

Listen to your world around you;
Process its dangers, pleasantries, tellings,
And tips.

Listen for your rules, listen for your inner “self”;
Listen, listen, listen, listen;
And act in good choice and appreciation.

HAPPINESS

THE ROAD TO HAPPINESS

Some people know what they want
 But don't know what they need;
Some people know what they need
 But can't get it;
Some people can get what they need
 If they only knew what they needed;
Some people can get what they need,
 And know what they need,
 But often will not get what they need;
Others usually know what they need,
 Can get what they need,
 And will get what they need;
For those who know, can, and will,
 Happiness is often their companion.

HAPPINESS

CLOUD OF SADNESS, SUN RAYS OF JOY

(Divine Love)

Yes, without warning, a dark cloud
Set upon a child of God and draped its soul.

And, yes, the child mourned of an emptiness
And a sadness whose source could not be
Discerned.

Yet, dark clouds cannot forever shroud
The warm and bright light of Divine sunshine.

HAPPINESS

INTENTIONAL HAPPINESS

Sometimes, you can have happiness with
Another, but not guaranteed or sustained
Happiness;
You can have happiness with yourself
As well as with another whose company
You enjoy;
Yet, should you expect another to make
And keep you happy with any realistic
Possibility of attaining such expectation?
Happiness comes with our choice to be or
Make ourselves happy;
Happiness comes with our expectation for
And perception of happiness;
Happiness is intentional and intermittent—
One cannot be happy all the time;
But, certainly, happiness is achievable most
Of the time, if we think happy thoughts
And make conscious choices toward a happy
Life.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *The light within us*.

SPIRITUALITY

LESSONS FROM SAGES OF THE AGES

From spiritual poetry of The Rumi,
I have learned that

There is no greater love
Than Divine love;

From Omar Khayyàm's *Rubiyat*,
I have learned that

"The moving finger writes,"
Thus one cannot change nor afford to
Dwell on the past;

From Khalil Gibran's *The Prophet*,
I have learned

The value of unselfish love;

From Joel Goldsmith's *Beyond Words
And Thoughts*, I have learned that

One cannot summon God at will,
But one must prepare the
Heart for God to come in;

From the teachings of Buddha, I have learned the value of
Ignoring or accepting the pains, sufferings,
And distractions of life;

From the teachings of Confucius, I have learned to do my duty
And to carry out accepted responsibilities;

From the teachings of Jesus, I have learned the value
Of love, giving, and unconditional forgiveness;

From the teachings of Muhammad, I have learned that there is
Value in all the sacred scriptures and from all
The great prophets of God;

From the Great Spirit of God that protects and inspires
My purpose and being, I have learned to listen
To my heart and mind above all else, and to allow
That same Divine Spirit to come into me and through me
For good of myself and others.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2005). *Spiritual teacher speaks*.

SPIRITUALITY

A VOICE FROM BEYOND

A voice in thought
Called my name, and I
Answered in kind, and
Surely the charge was
Given to me without
My knowledge of a mission
Of benevolence, and
I heeded the call from beyond
Without awareness of my
Own actions so directed.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2007). *Transitions in life and to death.*

SPIRITUALITY

DIVINE LIGHT WITHIN US

Is it possible that I, as we,
Possess within the knowledge
And light of all human existence
Of times past and now;
And with Divine help, we are able to
Release the brightest of light from
Our souls and hearts?

Is it possible that I, as we,
May have within and around the
Ancestral spirits of yore, that protect
The vessel of life's Earthly journey –
As I and we pick the fruits along our path
To nourish the soul within as souls of others?

SPIRITUALITY

PRAISE

Praise:

To the hard worker,
To the believer of right,
To the one of kind words;

Praise, praise, praise—
We give in life and death;
Praise to the giver,
Praise to the lover,
Praise to the sacred power of all,
Praise to the one who suffers,
For the meek and the weak;

Cry your praise,
Cheer your praise,
Sing your praise,
And award the praised;
But praise now,
And praise the worthy.

SPIRITUALITY

AN INSTRUMENT OF THY SONG

Let me be an instrument
Of Thy song,
Let the oceans roar, the moon glow,
The sun shine,
Let me be an instrument
Of Thy time,
Sing, sing, sing
Thy song through me,
Let me hear, let me adhere,
I will be an instrument
Of Thy symphony, Thy chorus;
I will be, if Thou will let me be –
Continue to be,
Thy instrument of music,
Thy instrument of joy.

SPIRITUALITY

DIVINE LOVE

Reach out in love,
And love will come back to you;
Reach out in love and giving,
And spiritual love will
Surround, embrace, and
Lift you higher;
Give and you will surely receive—
As soil receives from rain and
Plants from the sun;
Open your heart to goodness and warmth,
And the Spirit of God will come to you
And imbue your soul and being with
Peace and fulfillment unfound by
Any pleasure of your searchings.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2005). *Spiritual teacher speaks*.

PEACE

BE SURE, IF YOU CAN

If unsure, do nothing,
 If you can;
If confused, do nothing,
 If you can;
If in conflict, do nothing,
 If you can;
If unsure about a decision,
 Don't make that decision if you can;
If presented with an unwanted choice,
 Do nothing, if you can;
If persuaded and harassed in the face
 Of uncertainty and resistance,
 Do nothing, if you can;
If pulled toward a path of wrongdoing
 And self-destruction,
 Do nothing if you can;
If already in a storm, get out if you can;
If unhappy with a choice,
 Rechoose, if you can;
When sure about your choice or direction,
 Do something and don't procrastinate;
Make your choice, feel good about it, and
 Accept its results with peace and as your own;
Be at peace with you,
 And within your own energy;
Be at peace with the world,
 And within your world.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2004). *Poems for young people*.

PEACE

TO KILL IS TO DIE

Kill not, for to kill is to die;
To kill those we love
Is to kill part of ourselves;
To kill that we love
Is to kill life as sacred Creation.

Anger has no virtue in the
Destruction of sacred things;
So cork the barrel of a gun,
Defuse the power of bombs' bruises
And fire's smoke and burn;
Wipe thoughts of death's stain
From the blade of a knife.

To kill is unnatural;
To kill is to die;
Therefore, lay down your weapon,
Lay down your sword,
Lay down your anger,
Lay down your hurt.

To kill is unnatural,
To kill is blasphemous,
To kill is to die.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2008). *Beyond fear*.

PEACE

IS IT THEM, ME, OR US?

People changed, so it seems;
Safe in their cocoons;
Protecting themselves from the shocks
Of today's catastrophes and trauma;
Walking by each other without
Talk of today's worldly concerns;
Talking to each other without
Expression of concern for each other
And the day —
In my concern for no concern —
Observed or expressed;
Real or perceived; I ask:
"Is it them, is it me, or is it us?"

PEACE

ON PEACE

Prose 4

Personal peace is a state of mind, a state of body, and a state of attitude. It comes with how one sees the world and reacts to it. Personal peace, unlike agitation, comes with experience as well as a state of balance of one's own organism, one's self. A person who is at peace with self is one who has often overcome much of the worldly fears, as well as personal guilt. Peace can be found not just in one's thought of peace but in one's experience of complete tranquility of being. It is often achieved and maintained by:

- ❖ Not permitting others to disturb one's state of balance,
- ❖ Finding solitude and quiet as a time for peace within oneself,
- ❖ Slowing down and being aware of oneself and one's surroundings,
- ❖ Rehearsing peaceful meditative states in one's daily life,
- ❖ Listening to one's mind and body for agitation or imbalance, and positively addressing one's needs,
- ❖ Negotiating with one's loved ones for harmony and peace,
- ❖ Allowing peace to come spiritually into one's heart through positive thoughts and feelings,
- ❖ Ignoring, as much as possible, the malicious and destructive thoughts and actions of others, and
- ❖ Allowing the spirit of God's energy to permeate the core of one's life and to move one toward good for self and others.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2003). *God's gifts: Spiritual writings*.

PEACE

MIRACLES OF CREATION

Miracles are molded from
Divine events with time, and by
Time vested in right for the molded;

God so exists because we exist,
With and among the splendor
Of myriad miracles;

As the miracle of our own creation
Unfolds, learn we will, more about our
Origins as we ascend to destiny's pull;

God, as creator of us within His being,
Has given us that entrusted potential
To create ourselves, our futures,
Our own possibilities for miracles as
Trustees of His divine work of art.

PEACE

I LIVE TO SEE (Peace and Meaning)

I live to see a smiling face,
To share a worthy thought,
To feel the essence of peace,
To witness a life of meaning,
And to see a world of miracles
In my life and in the life of another.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2005). *Spiritual teacher speaks*.

PEACE

IF YOU ARE ANGRY

If you are angry,
Don't curse the empty spaces, or damage
Things or self, or hurt somebody;
Don't retaliate, or mayhem, or kill —
Just because you've been hurt.

If you are angry, don't pout, or blame,
Or resist understanding and clarification;
If you are angry, try not to be angry
In order to do right and just for you.

If you are angry, just close your eyes
And breathe deeply and slowly;
If you are angry, just try to cool down
And think straight.

PEACE

DON'T LANGUISH WITH ANGUISH

To languish with anguish, surely it's for naught;
Because it serves no good purpose, but rather distraught;
Brings self-imposed pain to the toilet's door, and
Flush the anger and fear so you will suffer no more;

Don't you languish one day more in self-imposed
Anger that you have accepted at your door;
Just pick up your spirit and accept happiness galore;
Just pick up your spirit and let happiness come through
Your door.

PEACE

GREETINGS FROM MY BEDROOM WINDOW

Hello, on this beautiful morning,
Dear passerby beneath my windowsill.
Slow down, slow down!
For what reason do you have for hurry
On such a bright, sunny, and wind-cooled day?
I beseech you to heed this moment and
Acknowledge your lovely path as you
Seek your destination.

Slow down, stop occasionally, and listen
To the birds, smell the flowers, waltz with
The cool wind embracing your face;
Slow down and appreciate sensations of the present,
And not thoughts and worries of the day.

Slow down, and live now –
Lest you will never live again.

HOPE

HOPE FOR HOPE

Hope that you will always have hope for your
Expectations and dreams;
To hope for naught is to be hopeless of trust
In yourself and your humankind;
To hope for naught is to be hopeless of trust
In a superior order of faith.

If defeated by yourself, try again when in a
Better mood;
If you fail in one arena, try in another;
If you fail at one task, try again or plant your
Foot to another.

Keep your confidence, self-reliance, and optimism;
Hold on to the strong rope you are, when your
Hands are burning and your
Arms numb from fatigue;
Rest along the mountainside, and climb once more
When fresh.

Hope for hope,
For without it, your spirit will die;
Hope for hope,
For without it, your dream will die.

FROM: Harper, F. D. (2004). *Poems for young people*.

HOPE

WHEN PIECES FALL APART

When pieces fall apart,
Away from the whole—
Hurt it does, but go on
We must with a love of those
Remains and priceless memories
Of past's parts, people, and places;
Cry we should of tears that
Do dry.

HOPE

THE DIFFICULTY OF GIVING

It is difficult, if not impossible,
To love those who do not want
To be loved or know not how to
Love or accept love from another;

It is difficult, if not impossible,
To give to those who are unappreciative
Of a gift needed;

It is difficult, if not impossible,
To teach those who do not feel
The need to learn or accept the gift of
One's teaching;

Nevertheless, as a giver, don't give up,
If it's worth the effort.

HOPE

AN UGLY TIME, A BEAUTIFUL TIME

Competing to be the best,
Even if it misfortunes another or others;
Trying to hurt others for no
Reason except self-satisfaction and greed;

Twisted values, confused choices –
Tangling in the spaces of emptiness;
Hoping that pleasure and power yields
Happiness, status, and success;
Spiritually void in heart and mind,
While plants and animals cry as
They shrivel to extinction;

An ugly time in ways;
Yet hope rebounds in the hearts of some remain –
In houses of worship and on streets of
Love and benevolence.

FRIENDSHIP

A FRIEND

A friend is
 Special for you
 And not against you;
Being a friend is in
 One's state of mind,
 One's state of action —
That special one who thinks and acts
 For another's happiness,
 For another's welfare;
Being a friend is giving of self
 With joy;
Being a friend is receiving from another
 With appreciation;
Being a friend is wanting to be a friend.

FRIENDSHIP

A GIFT TO YOU

A gift to you
For what you've done,
Not for what I expect of you;
A gift to you,
For what you are,
Not for what I want you to be;
A gift to you,
For what we have shared,
And not for what we give
To each other.