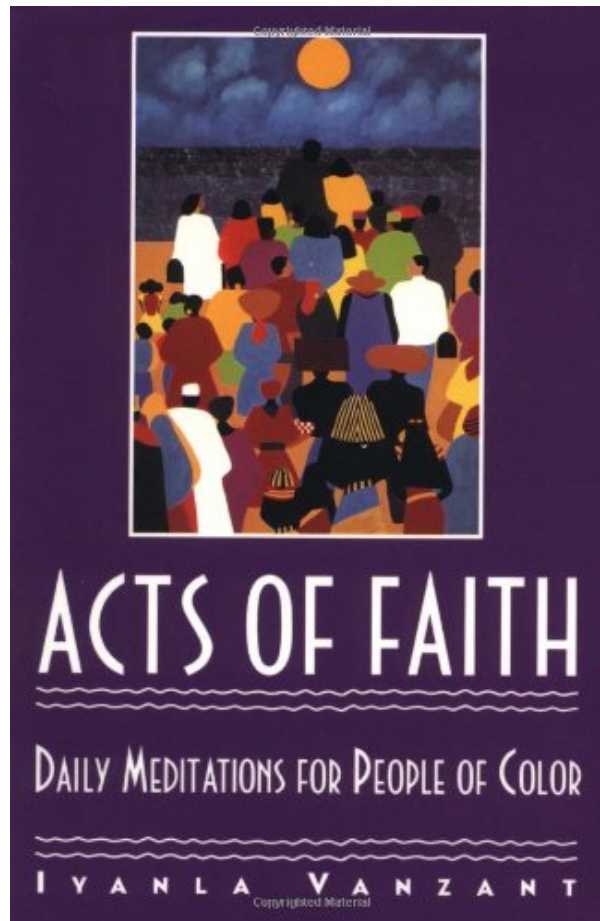
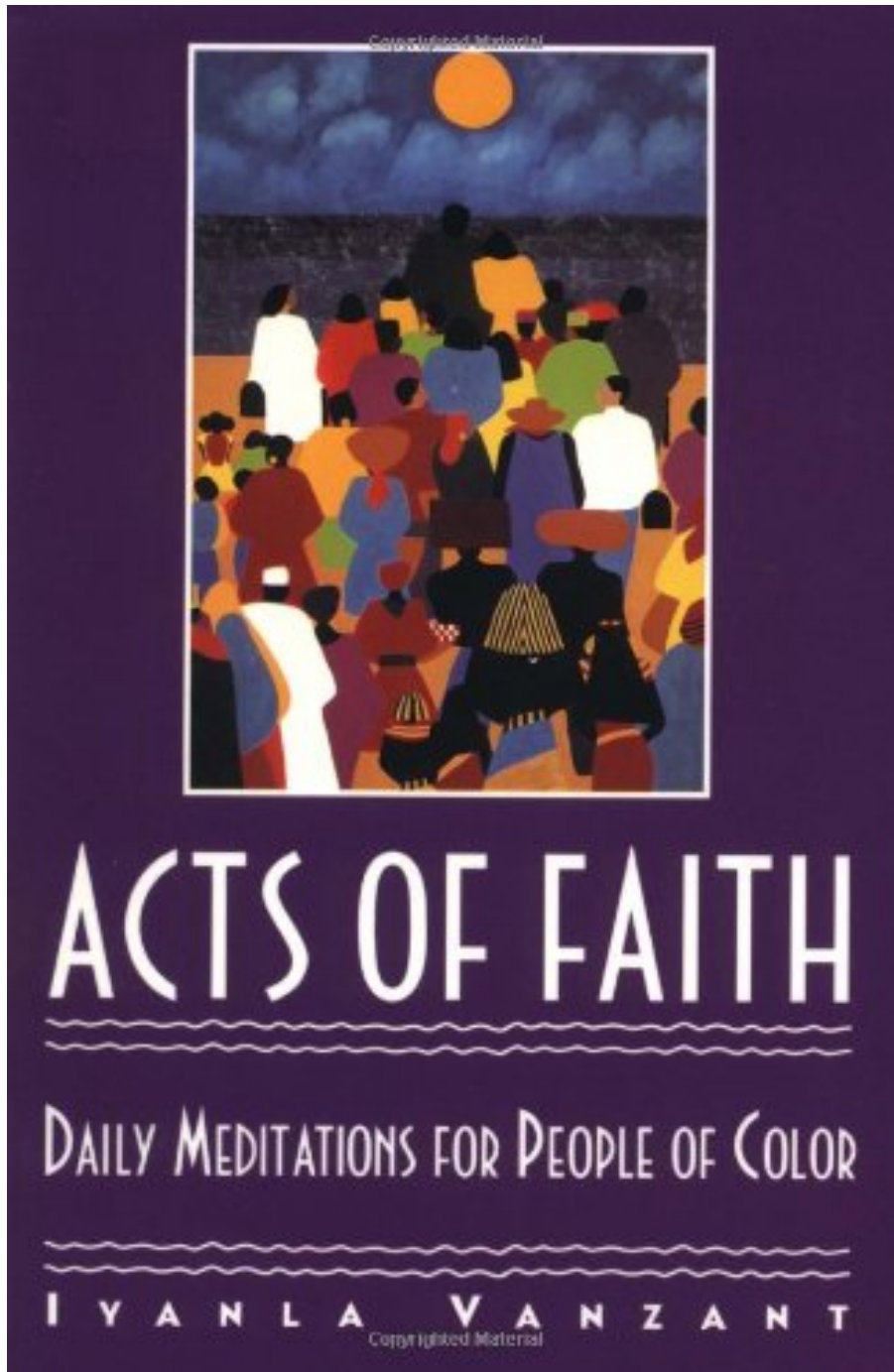


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Review

Molefi Kete Asante Professor and Chair, Department of African-American Studies, Temple University Acts of Faith is a dazzling collection of meditative statements. It should be a standard work for a long time. Iyanla Vanzant has found a way to help us keep body and soul whole.

Linda Villarosa Senior Editor, Essence magazine Acts of Faith is an important spiritual resource for African-Americans and other people of all colors.

About the Author

With more than 8 million books in print, Iyanla Vanzant has truly established a dedicated fan base. Iyanla's path to success took her through a multitude of life-changing experiences that shaped the profound insights she eagerly shares with others. A neglected, overweight, sexually abused child who was shuttled from one family to another, she became a teenage mother on welfare living in the projects of a major urban city. Vanzant took control of her life when she walked out of her second abusive marriage and entered Medgar Evers College in New York and then the City University of New York Law School. She moved to Philadelphia with her children and became a public defender for three years. Then she eventually became an ordained minister, who was committed to a message based on the principles of divine power and self-determination.

Iyanla combined her professional skills with her life's lessons and embarked on a writing and speaking career. Her mass appeal is evident in her overwhelming success as an author. In the Meantime was a #1 New York Times bestseller, where it spent 20 weeks on the list, and she has had numerous other major bestsellers. As a nationally recognized speaker she has sold out such prestigious venues as New York's Jacob Javits Convention Center, Nashville's Grand Ole Opry, Atlanta's Civic Center, and the Wiltern Theater in Los Angeles. Vanzant is also familiar to the daytime TV audience from her role as a regular contributor on "The Oprah Winfrey Show."

Acclaimed journalist and producer Barbara Walters recognized Vanzant's extraordinary appeal, seeing in her a "breakaway talent" with the potential for huge success in daytime television. With Walters and partner Bill

Geddie on board to executive produce, Buena Vista Productions to develop the show, and Buena Vista Television as distributor, the road to Iyanla was forged.

Vanzant has received numerous accolades for her work. In 1992 Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley named October 21st "Tapping the Power Within Day" in honor of a workshop she presented in that city for African-American women. In 1994, the National Association of Equal Opportunity in Education, an organization comprised of the presidents and administrators of the 117 predominantly Black colleges in the United States named her Alumni of the Year. She also was awarded an "Oni" by the International Congress of Black Women as one of the nation's unsung heroes, and she served as the national spokesperson for Literacy Volunteers of America in 1998.

In 1999 she was listed among the 100 Most Influential African-Americans by Ebony magazine. Later that year, she was awarded the 31st NAACP Image Award for "Outstanding Literary Work, Non-Fiction" for Yesterday I Cried. She also earned her first Honorary Doctorate degree, Doctor of Humane Letters, from the City University of New York, Medgar Evers College. In 2000, she earned her second honorary degree, Doctor of Divinity, from the Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. In addition, Ebony has named her one of their "55 Most Intriguing People," Vibe magazine tabbed her one of "100 Leaders of the New Millennium" and Newsweek recently included her as one of the "Women of the New Century."

The mother of three and grandmother of four, Vanzant lives in Silver Spring, Maryland with her husband Adeyemi and Mr. Coco, their cat.

To learn how Iyanla can help you get started on your journey toward spiritual enlightenment, visit Inner Visions Worldwide, Inc., at www.innervisionworldwide.com.

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Chapter 1

January 1

There is a power greater than myself who loves me exactly as I Am.

The stress began the day you learned you were expected to please other people. Parents wanted you to stay clean and be quiet. Neighbors wanted you to be respectful and helpful. Teachers wanted you to be attentive and alert. Friends wanted you to share and hang out. Whenever you failed to do exactly what someone expected of you, you weren't good, or good enough. You were bad, weak or dumb. Unfortunately, you began to believe it. Giving in to the demands, day by day, you lost a little more of yourself and your understanding of the truth. The truth is you are fine, just the way you are! Perfect in your imperfection! You are divine! Growing brighter and more brilliant each day, you can accept the truth of who you are. The next time you want to know who you are, what you are or if something is the right thing to do, don't ask your neighbor -- ask the power within...and pay attention to the response!

The divine power within knows exactly who I Am!

January 2

Our hearts are the wrapping which preserve God's word, we need no more.

The Koran, Sura 4:155

When was the last time you sat down to have a heart to heart with yourself? Have you really examined your heart lately? Are you harboring childhood wounds? Are you still nursing a broken heart? Are you frightened? Angry? Guilty or ashamed? Is there someone you need to apologize to? Who have you forgiven lately? If God were to speak through your heart today, what would you hear? In the everyday quest to get through life, we sometimes forget we really do have all we need. It's tucked away safely inside of us. It contributes to our thoughts and motivates our actions. If we clear it out it will actually speak to us and tell us exactly what to do. When was the last time you had a heart to heart with yourself?

With a pure heart, I am balanced in life.

January 3

Don't be afraid to look at your faults.

Yoruba proverb

Even though we know there is always room for improvement, we tend to shy away from criticism. Our egos tell us we are being attacked and quite naturally we want to strike back. In order to be whole, healthy beings, we need to know all there is to know about ourselves. Sometimes that information must come from others. This may mean admitting that we are not always right, and knowing it is okay to make a mistake. A mistake, an error, a poor choice, or bad decision does not equal "there is something wrong with me." It means you are on your way to being better. We do not make mistakes on the basis of race or color. We make them because we are human. When we acknowledge our errors and face up to our shortcomings, no one can use them against us.

I Am not afraid to admit when I am wrong.

January 4

Take a day to heal from the lies you've told yourself and the ones that have been told to you.

Maya Angelou

There comes a time when we have to pause to listen to what we are telling ourselves -- "I'm so stupid," "I'm broke," "I don't know how," "I can't take it anymore..." Yet in the midst of our dishonest chatter we are making great strides, accomplishing many tasks, overcoming seemingly insurmountable odds. We can't see it because we keep lying to ourselves. We lie because we've been lied to -- "You're no good," "You can't do it," "You'll never make it," "How do you think you're gonna do that..." We can't think because there are so many lies running loose in our minds. The only way to eradicate a lie is with the truth. We must not only speak the truth, we must think in truth. The truth is, we start from a place where success is born, in the mind's eye of the Most High. The truth is that no one has ever made a true deal with the Master and lost.

The truth springs forth from my mind.

January 5

STOP!

Most of us know exactly what it is that creates the pain, confusion, stagnation and disruption in our lives. Whether it is a habit, behavior, relationship or fear, we know. Unfortunately, we seem powerless to stop whatever it is. Sometimes we believe we don't have the discipline or willpower to stop. The behavior becomes so habitual we do it without thinking. Other times we know exactly what it is and what we do, but we simply keep doing it anyway. We are the only ones responsible for what goes on in our lives. We can make excuses and blame others, but we are responsible to and for ourselves. When we find something or someone creating in our lives that which we do not want, we must muster the courage and strength to stop it.

Today I use my power to stop what is no longer good to me.

January 6

You've got to get the mind cleared out before you put the truth in it.

Minister Louis Farrakhan

Everyone has something they are ashamed of, afraid of or that they feel guilty about. Each of us in our own way will devise a neat little method of handling it. Some of us deny. Some of us blame. Some of us do a combination of both. Undoubtedly the day will come when we will be forced to examine that which we have tucked away. We can willingly begin the process of examination by telling the truth to ourselves about ourselves. We all have the right to make mistakes. Our fault is being righteous about it. When we fail to admit our faults, the faults become what everyone can see. When we refuse to admit what we have done in the past, we block our path to the future. No matter how terrible we think we are, how bad we believe we have been, how low we think we have fallen, we can clean out our minds and begin again.

The only way out is truth.

January 7

Do not wish to be anything but what you are, and to be that perfectly.

St. Francis De Sales

A minister friend of mine once told me, "On the seventh day God rested." He said, "It is good and very good." Then we come along and try to improve on perfection. For people of color, the most damaging habit we have is trying to be who and what we are not. We expend so much energy trying to fix who we are, we rarely get to really know ourselves. If we truly realized how precious the gift of life is, we would not waste a moment trying to improve it. If we really understood how precious we are to the gift of life, we would not waste time trying to fix ourselves. It's not about what we look like or what we have. It's not about fixing our face, body or lives. It's about taking what we have and doing as much as we can with it. It's about learning and growing. When we are willing to learn what we don't know and use our experiences, our perfection will begin to show.

I accept me as I Am.

January 8

Know thy ideal and live for that. For each soul must give an account for its own self.

Paramhansa Yogananda

Everything that happens to us, and every choice we make, is a reflection of what we believe about ourselves. We cannot outperform our level of self-esteem. We cannot draw to ourselves more than we believe we are worth. The things we believe and say about ourselves come back to us in many ways. Self-motivation comes from self-knowledge. We must inspire ourselves by believing we have the power to accomplish everything we set out to do. We must put faith in our ability to use mind and spirit and picture our lives the way we want them to be. We must use inner strength and the power of our being to tear down the walls, break through the barriers and move through the obstacles with ease. Our bodies have been freed. Now we must train our minds to believe it.

I Am free, hallelujah, I Am free!

January 9

You may not know how to raise your self-esteem, but you definitely know how to stop lowering it.

Awo Osun Kunle

Self-esteem is a sense of value and worth that comes from a positive self-image. Self-esteem begins with you and extends to all that you do. With the belief that your best is always good enough, no one but you can destroy your self-esteem. You destroy your esteem when you do not keep your word. When you do not honor the agreements and commitments you make. If you say "yes" when you really mean "no." When you don't follow your first thought. It does not matter what your environment may be. It is of little consequence what your past has been. It is not your concern what others may be saying or doing. It is only in your mind that you build and destroy your self-esteem.

I Am as great as I think I Am.

January 10

It thy right eye offends thee, pluck it out...

Matthew 5:29

The only way to eliminate stress and pain is to stop doing the things that create it. It is easy to see what others do to us while we forget the drama we create for ourselves. How? Take your pick: The need to be right. Lack of life purpose. How we think others see us. Trying to fix the world. Dishonesty with self and others. Accepting someone else's truth. Seeking material wealth over spiritual values. Doing it alone. My way is the right way. Fear of the future. Negative thought patterns. Trying to prove yourself to others. Anger over the past. Telling other people what to do. It all boils down to "not knowing who we are."

When I know me, I stop doing what's not good for me.

January 11

When you strengthen your self-esteem, there is no room for jealousy.

Dr. Harold Bloomfield

Jealousy is the surest way to get rid of the very person you are afraid of losing. When you say I love you, it means "I want the very best for you whether or not I am included." You must acknowledge any feelings of jealousy to understand what they are. Jealousy is a signpost of the longings in your subconscious mind. It reminds you that what you are longing is also longing you. There are only two emotions, love and fear. When jealousy comes up, stop and recognize that it is actually fear raising its ugly head. Fear of losing someone or something, fear that there is not enough. If you allow yourself to be jealous, you cannot love. It is important to acknowledge all your feelings and not beat yourself up for having them. Your feelings are not good or bad, they just are. Jealousy is simply reminding you that you are worthy of the best. When you remember who you are, the jealousy will dissolve and you will be ready to receive what you want.

I honor my feelings no matter what they are.

January 12

There's absolutely no way to save people from the things in their eyes. They must gather the courage to do it for themselves.

Alvin Lester Ben-Moring

Before we were indoctrinated to the rules of the world, with all its do's and don'ts, we were actually very receptive. We were willing to try new things, go into forbidden places and take risks without hesitation. We did not believe in unhappiness, defeat, rejection or lack. We asked for what we wanted and were willing to demand that it be provided. We thought the world existed to respond to our needs. It might do us well to revert back to the ways of childhood if we want to bring some good into our lives. It's not the temper tantrums or childish outbursts we want. It is the openness and freedom from limitation we need. We have been taught to accept fear, lack, sorrow and restriction as a part of everyday life. We are afraid to make demands of life because we believe we can't have what we want. We no longer feel free to express what we feel, when we feel it. Now, we want to be everyone's friend. If only we could think like a child again, there's a good chance we would find the freedom we gave up to become adults.

Today, I Am a child again.

January 13

Heaven is where you'll be when you are okay right where you are.

Sun Ra

Pretend for a moment that you are a mink -- beautiful, valuable, precious because of the skin that covers you. Suddenly your homeland is invaded by hunters, with bats. The hunters seem kind, yet you approach them cautiously. They pet the younglings who are innocent, less cautious. As you approach your young, the hunters attack. They beat you. You are dazed, struggling for composure. The hunters steal your skin, your heritage, the very essence of your being. They leave you to die, but you survive. Your fur grows back. Stronger. More beautiful than before. Somehow it doesn't make sense. The very thing that makes you who and what you are is the source of pain. Confused, distrustful, you hide yourself or camouflage your fur, your essence. Silently you begin to curse your fur, because the hunters return again and again. You begin to understand you will never get away from being what you are. As long as you have fur, you will be hunted. The issue is: Will you curse your fur, give up and die? Or just continue to be a proud but cautious mink?

I will not hide who or what I Am.

January 14

Successful people succeed because they learn from their failures.

Bettina Flores

The most difficult things to face in life are the things you do not like about yourself. Not your ears, legs, hair or those habits and abilities you feel are not up to par. It is the ugly little things you know about yourself that need a good long look. You recognize it when you see it in others, but you make excuses for yourself. You may go to any length to cover a shortcoming, while you quickly point out the ills of another. Since the very thing you want to hide is the thing that shows itself, you need to be able to say, "I know that and I'm working on it!" It takes a loving heart, a willing mind and a sensitive spirit to get to the core of the self. But when you do, you can root out the seeds of ugliness.

I acknowledge, accept and embrace everything about me.

January 15

We [must] realize that our future lies chiefly in our own hands.

Paul Robeson

If you can blame anyone for any condition in your life, then you, not they, are digging your grave. Your chief adversary comes to teach you a lesson. Your most difficult challenge strengthens your survival skills. Your greatest fear deepens your faith. Your weakest ability beckons you to grow. Anyone and anything can challenge you. It will not overtake you until you surrender. Only you can determine what you do and how you respond in a situation. It is your responsibility to make a decision about what is important to you; choose what you want and how you are going to get it. Once you accomplish that, it is your responsibility to move forward until you get it.

I Am taking a stand for me.

January 16

Sitting in a sacred place means you must sit alone.

Marilyn "Omi Funke" Torres

There are times when we each have sacred blessings to learn. These are the lessons that will push us to the limit of our greatness. At these times, it may seem that others are abandoning, rejecting or criticizing us without just cause. They are not. No matter how hard we try, we can't seem to do, say or be what others expect of us. We can't. The harder we try to pull others to us, the farther they move away. The more we try to fix things, the worse they seem to get. What we must do at these very sacred times is pull back, withdraw and prepare to grow. Our lessons are very sacred. They are the basic ingredient of our greatness. To accept them we must be open. To receive them we must be willing. To understand them we must be alone.

I Am sitting in a sacred place.

January 17

In the solitude of your mind are the answers to all your questions about life. You must take the time to ask and listen.

Bawa Mahaiyaddeen

There are times when we all feel as if we need to be alone. We just want to get away from everyone and everything and be alone. Sometimes we may feel guilty or selfish for thinking this way, but it is perfectly normal. To be alone is the best thing we can do for ourselves. To be alone means to be all one with the spirit within. When we are alone, we have an opportunity to get in touch with, to talk to and be guided by our power source. Spirit. To be alone means going to the essence of your being. To ask questions within and get clear, concise answers. To be alone means taking the time to give to yourself a small portion of what we have been giving of ourselves for so long. It is like drinking from the fountain of restoration to bring back your physical, mental and spiritual health. So go ahead. Tell them all and don't feel bad about saying it. "I want to be alone."

Today I Am all one with the spirit within.

January 18

I have never been contained except that I made the prison.

Mari Evans

When you concern yourself with doing only what others "think" you can do, you lay the floor of your prison. When you conform your activities based on what others might say, you put the bars around your prison. When you allow what others have done or are doing to determine what you can do, you build the roof of your prison. When you allow fear, competition or greed to guide your actions, you lock yourself up and throw away the key. It is our concern over what others say, do and think about us that imprisons our mind, body and spirit.

What other people think about me is not my concern.

January 19

In our deepest hour of need the Creator asks for no credentials.

Eulogy of Horace Harris

There are times when we feel bad about ourselves, what we've done and what we are facing. In these moments we may even believe we deserve to be punished, because we are "bad" or have done bad things. There are times when we feel so low, we convince ourselves that we don't matter and neither does anything or anyone else. That is when we usually start to think about God. Is there such a thing? Does God really care? Maybe if we had gone to God before, we wouldn't be where we are now. No matter. We're here, so let's go. This is a prime opportunity to make a new start, begin again and move on. The key is to remember that no matter where we've been, what we've done or how awful we feel right now, the One we may be running from knows exactly where we are. He has placed a light of peace in our hearts. A prayer will flip the switch.

I look within for all the answers I need.

January 20

You must learn how to make it on the broken pieces.

Rev. Louise Williams-Bishop

Ripped from their land; stripped of their culture, religion, name; beaten for rebelling and blamed for their state of existence, the descendants of the Africans have a right to feel broken. Being broken does not mean you are unequipped. There are enough pieces left for you to grab onto, hold onto and paddle your way to shore. Your life is the piece that equips you to have a goal. Your goal is the piece that will equip you with confidence. Your confidence is the piece that will give you persistence. Your persistence is the piece that will ensure your success. There are pieces from your parents, friends, even foes. There are pieces of books, songs and experience. More important, there are the pieces that well up from deep inside your being that will guide you surely and safely. Put them all together and hold on.

My pieces may be broken but I am going on anyhow.

Rev. Louise Williams-Bishop

January 21

You are as much as you are right now.

Yoruba proverb

We have such poor images of ourselves that we have difficulty understanding the good others see in us. When someone gives us a compliment, we are quick to point out what is wrong. When someone supports or encourages us, we remind them of our failures. We play ourselves down to such a degree that others begin to question the faith they have placed in us. This vicious cycle can only lower our already low self-esteem. Today is a good time to rethink our thoughts about ourselves. We can accept the compliments we receive when we give them to ourselves first. We can build our confidence by celebrating our small victories and successes. We can support the faith and trust others have in us by supporting and having faith in ourselves. It all begins with our willingness to acknowledge that we are really fine, just the way we are.

I really am okay with me.

God isn't alarmed when we hit rock bottom. He made the rock.

Baptist Minister

There are times in our lives when we feel there is no way up or out. Illness. Poverty. Confusion. Loneliness. Desperation. They take us to the place called "rock bottom." In these times you may feel weak and vulnerable, and it is easy to lose faith in your ability to go on. It is exactly in these times that you must turn to the infinite power within yourself. You must know that the answer is exactly where you are. The strength you need, the answer you want, the solution that will turn the situation around is you. If you can put aside the anger, fear, weakness and desperation for just a minute you will remember the "other times" you were at the bottom and how in a moment, miraculously, you were lifted up.

There is no spot where God is not.

January 23

Ask, and it shall be given you...

Matthew 7:7

We all get to a point where we feel confused and indecisive. We can't seem to figure out what we want or what to do. We want everything, but nothing brings satisfaction. Our spirit is restless because the mind is racing. It may not be that we don't know, it is probably that we are afraid to ask. We may feel as if we are running to something, but actually we are running away. In those times we need to sit down, get still and evaluate just what it is we want. We must do this quietly, honestly and often, if necessary. We are human beings, blessed with the power of reason. We have, at all times, the right and the power to figure out what we want. Once that's done, we must have the courage to ask for it. If we let the color of our skin, the gender we express or the ways of the world limit us, we will forever be denied. We owe it to ourselves to choose a way and ask for it. Once we ask, we can rest.

Today I plan to choose and ask with an open mind.

January 24

For no man can be blessed without the acceptance of his own head.

Yoruba proverb

The wise Africans knew and understood the power of the mind. People can only be as good as their thoughts, as successful as mental patterns, as progressive as their ideas. Africans did not rely on books, relative theories or postulative quotations. They listened to their thoughts, prayed for divine guidance, followed the intuitive urging. Education, money, fame and notoriety were considered as useful as dirty dishwater without a clear, firm, focused mind. Their process was simple. They developed a strong faith and connection to the Creator. A healthy love and respect for their ancestors and parents. A commitment and dedication to the traditions of their family. And a trusting relationship to the spirit of their own head. Trust your head and your first thought regardless of what others may say. Your head takes you to the places you want to go.

I bless the spirit of my head.

January 25

Check out your own B.S.

Jewel Diamond-Taylor

B.S. refers to Belief System -- those things you hold to be true about yourself and others. Your B.S. is a product of your experiences and perceptions. Those things you have come to believe are true. Those things buried in the back of your mind. But are they really buried? No! Your belief system determines your environment, your abilities and the way you approach life's experiences. What do you really believe about yourself? What do you believe about your ability to have, to be and to do all the things you hold dear in your heart? If you really want to know what you believe, take a look at the people, conditions and situations in

your immediate environment. They are the reflection of your own B.S.

I Am a true believer in the best about me.

January 26

It takes a deep commitment to change and an even deeper commitment to grow.

Ralph Ellison

When you know you are thinking, saying or doing things that are unhealthy or unproductive, you must do more than know. There must be a genuine, loving support for the "self" to make a change. Change does not mean replacing one bad habit for another. It does not mean beating up on yourself or feeling guilty or ashamed. Change means voluntarily removing yourself from the people and environment that support you in remaining unhealthy. Change means identifying what you are doing, recognizing when you are doing it and gently guiding yourself to do something else. Change means not making excuses for yourself, but doing exactly what you say you will do. When you support yourself in making needed changes, you are supporting your own growth. Growth is the commitment to being, doing and having the best.

I Am growing by thoughts, words and deeds.

January 27

There are two things over which you have complete dominion, authority and control -- your mind and your mouth.

Molefi Asante

Your mind is an instrument. A precious gift to be valued and cared for. You are not always in control of what goes into your mind, but only you can determine what stays there. If you allow negativity to pervade in your mind, you will produce that negativity with your mouth. Your mouth is the mechanism that reveals how well you care for your mind. The conditions in your life stem from the most dominant thoughts of which you speak. Nothing has a hold on your mind that you cannot break free of. Since your mind will respond to what is said to you, speak to the conditions in your life. When they are wanted, give thanks. When they are unwanted, demand they change.

I Am in control of my mind and mouth.

January 28

You've got the right one, baby! Uh-huh!

As performed by Ray Charles

You are the only one who can do it like you do it. You are the best. You have what it takes. You've got juice. You've got the power. You and only you have what you have, and nobody can take that away from you. You come from the best, the beginning, the source. You are destined to be great. You inherited a legacy of success from those who came before you. They knew you could do it, too! You are the light in life. You light up the world. You make life worth living. You can't lose with the stuff you use. You are the beginning and

the end of the phenomena called you. You are the one who makes the bed. You call the shots. You stand heads above the crowd. They can't hold a candle to you. When you put your mind to something, you get it done. So what are you waiting for?

I Am the you that can do it.

January 29

If you don't sell your head, no one will buy it.

Yoruba proverb

We are capable of directing and determining the outcome of any and every situation we face through the power of thought. Yet since many of us do not realize our true power, we cannot realize the truth of the statement: "No one can do anything or make you do anything unless you let them." The key is to be honest with yourself and others at all times, keep your thoughts focused on the best possible outcome for everyone involved and never allow yourself to be pushed where you don't choose to be. If someone called you a grape, you probably wouldn't respond. But if that same person refers to you as a coon or spade, you would most likely hold them responsible for your reaction. No one but you can ever be held accountable for what you do. How you respond in any given situation is purely a reflection of what you think -- what is in your head. When someone does or says something you believe is offensive, do yourself a favor -- don't sell your head.

It's what's inside my head that counts.

January 30

Ford got a better idea, you can get one too.

Linda Green Beatty

The things our parents tell us, the things we read in books, the things we hear and overhear create the foundation of our thoughts. These thoughts grow into ideas. For many people of color, the ideas they have about themselves are not good. There is the idea that it is hard for Black people to make it. This is supported by the idea that Black people don't try. There is the idea that other people are preferred over Black people. This gives birth to the idea that Black people are not good enough. There is the idea that Black men aren't respected. This comes from the idea that Black women have abandoned Black men. The idea is that because there is so much conflict between Black men and Black women, Black children are lost. The thing we seem to forget is that an idea will die unless it is acted upon. Everytime we entertain the truth of false ideas we give it the right to live. If an idea is not of your making or liking, you can choose to have a better one.

I believe in my right to have unlimited goodness in my life.

January 31

The mind is and always will be our primary business.

Dr. Benjamin Mays

There are times when it is difficult to make sense of the experiences we have in life. How are we to get ahead

without money? How are we to overcome intangible obstacles? How are we to move through the challenges, difficulties and limitations we face at every turn? It may seem that no matter how hard you try, something or someone is there to block you. In those times remember the words of Dr. Benjamin Mays:

It is not your environment;

It is not your history;

It is not your education or ability;

It is the quality of your mind that predicts
your future.

I take the time to develop my own mind.

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From the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *In the Meantime*, and with nearly a million copies in print, *Acts of Faith* is an internationally acclaimed resource for spiritual guidance and balance, specially written for people of color.

Acts of Faith is a thoughtful and inspirational book that explores the unique pressures on people of color today with great insight and sensitivity. Each day of the year has a unique inspirational quote or message with it, along with a short essay to assist in reflection and wisdom. These messages are pulled from a great variety of spiritual practices and teachings, to assist spiritual people across faiths and disciplines. This book is invaluable for people of color in search of motivation and support as they journey on their spiritual path.

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- 400 pages

Features

- Great product!

Review

Molefi Kete Asante Professor and Chair, Department of African-American Studies, Temple University *Acts of Faith* is a dazzling collection of meditative statements. It should be a standard work for a long time. Iyanla Vanzant has found a way to help us keep body and soul whole.

Linda Villarosa Senior Editor, *Essence* magazine *Acts of Faith* is an important spiritual resource for African-Americans and other people of all colors.

About the Author

With more than 8 million books in print, Iyanla Vanzant has truly established a dedicated fan base.

Iyanla's path to success took her through a multitude of life-changing experiences that shaped the profound insights she eagerly shares with others. A neglected, overweight, sexually abused child who was shuttled from one family to another, she became a teenage mother on welfare living in the projects of a major urban city. Vanzant took control of her life when she walked out of her second abusive marriage and entered Medgar Evers College in New York and then the City University of New York Law School. She moved to Philadelphia with her children and became a public defender for three years. Then she eventually became an

ordained minister, who was committed to a message based on the principles of divine power and self-determination.

Iyanla combined her professional skills with her life's lessons and embarked on a writing and speaking career. Her mass appeal is evident in her overwhelming success as an author. *In the Meantime* was a #1 New York Times bestseller, where it spent 20 weeks on the list, and she has had numerous other major bestsellers. As a nationally recognized speaker she has sold out such prestigious venues as New York's Jacob Javits Convention Center, Nashville's Grand Ole Opry, Atlanta's Civic Center, and the Wiltern Theater in Los Angeles. Vanzant is also familiar to the daytime TV audience from her role as a regular contributor on "The Oprah Winfrey Show."

Acclaimed journalist and producer Barbara Walters recognized Vanzant's extraordinary appeal, seeing in her a "breakaway talent" with the potential for huge success in daytime television. With Walters and partner Bill Geddie on board to executive produce, Buena Vista Productions to develop the show, and Buena Vista Television as distributor, the road to Iyanla was forged.

Vanzant has received numerous accolades for her work. In 1992 Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley named October 21st "Tapping the Power Within Day" in honor of a workshop she presented in that city for African-American women. In 1994, the National Association of Equal Opportunity in Education, an organization comprised of the presidents and administrators of the 117 predominantly Black colleges in the United States named her Alumni of the Year. She also was awarded an "Oni" by the International Congress of Black Women as one of the nation's unsung heroes, and she served as the national spokesperson for Literacy Volunteers of America in 1998.

In 1999 she was listed among the 100 Most Influential African-Americans by *Ebony* magazine. Later that year, she was awarded the 31st NAACP Image Award for "Outstanding Literary Work, Non-Fiction" for *Yesterday I Cried*. She also earned her first Honorary Doctorate degree, Doctor of Humane Letters, from the City University of New York, Medgar Evars College. In 2000, she earned her second honorary degree, Doctor of Divinity, from the Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. In addition, *Ebony* has named her one of their "55 Most Intriguing People," *Vibe* magazine tabbed her one of "100 Leaders of the New Millennium" and *Newsweek* recently included her as one of the "Women of the New Century."

The mother of three and grandmother of four, Vanzant lives in Silver Spring, Maryland with her husband Adeyemi and Mr. Coco, their cat.

To learn how Iyanla can help you get started on your journey toward spiritual enlightenment, visit Inner Visions Worldwide, Inc., at www.innervisionsworldwide.com.

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Chapter 1

January 1

There is a power greater than myself who loves me exactly as I Am.

The stress began the day you learned you were expected to please other people. Parents wanted you to stay clean and be quiet. Neighbors wanted you to be respectful and helpful. Teachers wanted you to be attentive and alert. Friends wanted you to share and hang out. Whenever you failed to do exactly what someone

expected of you, you weren't good, or good enough. You were bad, weak or dumb. Unfortunately, you began to believe it. Giving in to the demands, day by day, you lost a little more of yourself and your understanding of the truth. The truth is you are fine, just the way you are! Perfect in your imperfection! You are divine! Growing brighter and more brilliant each day, you can accept the truth of who you are. The next time you want to know who you are, what you are or if something is the right thing to do, don't ask your neighbor -- ask the power within...and pay attention to the response!

The divine power within knows exactly who I Am!

January 2

Our hearts are the wrapping which preserve God's word, we need no more.

The Koran, Sura 4:155

When was the last time you sat down to have a heart to heart with yourself? Have you really examined your heart lately? Are you harboring childhood wounds? Are you still nursing a broken heart? Are you frightened? Angry? Guilty or ashamed? Is there someone you need to apologize to? Who have you forgiven lately? If God were to speak through your heart today, what would you hear? In the everyday quest to get through life, we sometimes forget we really do have all we need. It's tucked away safely inside of us. It contributes to our thoughts and motivates our actions. If we clear it out it will actually speak to us and tell us exactly what to do. When was the last time you had a heart to heart with yourself?

With a pure heart, I am balanced in life.

January 3

Don't be afraid to look at your faults.

Yoruba proverb

Even though we know there is always room for improvement, we tend to shy away from criticism. Our egos tell us we are being attacked and quite naturally we want to strike back. In order to be whole, healthy beings, we need to know all there is to know about ourselves. Sometimes that information must come from others. This may mean admitting that we are not always right, and knowing it is okay to make a mistake. A mistake, an error, a poor choice, or bad decision does not equal "there is something wrong with me." It means you are on your way to being better. We do not make mistakes on the basis of race or color. We make them because we are human. When we acknowledge our errors and face up to our shortcomings, no one can use them against us.

I Am not afraid to admit when I am wrong.

January 4

Take a day to heal from the lies you've told yourself and the ones that have been told to you.

Maya Angelou

There comes a time when we have to pause to listen to what we are telling ourselves -- "I'm so stupid," "I'm

broke," "I don't know how," "I can't take it anymore..." Yet in the midst of our dishonest chatter we are making great strides, accomplishing many tasks, overcoming seemingly insurmountable odds. We can't see it because we keep lying to ourselves. We lie because we've been lied to -- "You're no good," "You can't do it," "You'll never make it," "How do you think you're gonna do that..." We can't think because there are so many lies running loose in our minds. The only way to eradicate a lie is with the truth. We must not only speak the truth, we must think in truth. The truth is, we start from a place where success is born, in the mind's eye of the Most High. The truth is that no one has ever made a true deal with the Master and lost.

The truth springs forth from my mind.

January 5

STOP!

Most of us know exactly what it is that creates the pain, confusion, stagnation and disruption in our lives. Whether it is a habit, behavior, relationship or fear, we know. Unfortunately, we seem powerless to stop whatever it is. Sometimes we believe we don't have the discipline or willpower to stop. The behavior becomes so habitual we do it without thinking. Other times we know exactly what it is and what we do, but we simply keep doing it anyway. We are the only ones responsible for what goes on in our lives. We can make excuses and blame others, but we are responsible to and for ourselves. When we find something or someone creating in our lives that which we do not want, we must muster the courage and strength to stop it.

Today I use my power to stop what is no longer good to me.

January 6

You've got to get the mind cleared out before you put the truth in it.

Minister Louis Farrakhan

Everyone has something they are ashamed of, afraid of or that they feel guilty about. Each of us in our own way will devise a neat little method of handling it. Some of us deny. Some of us blame. Some of us do a combination of both. Undoubtedly the day will come when we will be forced to examine that which we have tucked away. We can willingly begin the process of examination by telling the truth to ourselves about ourselves. We all have the right to make mistakes. Our fault is being righteous about it. When we fail to admit our faults, the faults become what everyone can see. When we refuse to admit what we have done in the past, we block our path to the future. No matter how terrible we think we are, how bad we believe we have been, how low we think we have fallen, we can clean out our minds and begin again.

The only way out is truth.

January 7

Do not wish to be anything but what you are, and to be that perfectly.

St. Francis De Sales

A minister friend of mine once told me, "On the seventh day God rested." He said, "It is good and very good." Then we come along and try to improve on perfection. For people of color, the most damaging habit

we have is trying to be who and what we are not. We expend so much energy trying to fix who we are, we rarely get to really know ourselves. If we truly realized how precious the gift of life is, we would not waste a moment trying to improve it. If we really understood how precious we are to the gift of life, we would not waste time trying to fix ourselves. It's not about what we look like or what we have. It's not about fixing our face, body or lives. It's about taking what we have and doing as much as we can with it. It's about learning and growing. When we are willing to learn what we don't know and use our experiences, our perfection will begin to show.

I accept me as I Am.

January 8

Know thy ideal and live for that. For each soul must give an account for its own self.

Paramhansa Yogananda

Everything that happens to us, and every choice we make, is a reflection of what we believe about ourselves. We cannot outperform our level of self-esteem. We cannot draw to ourselves more than we believe we are worth. The things we believe and say about ourselves come back to us in many ways. Self-motivation comes from self-knowledge. We must inspire ourselves by believing we have the power to accomplish everything we set out to do. We must put faith in our ability to use mind and spirit and picture our lives the way we want them to be. We must use inner strength and the power of our being to tear down the walls, break through the barriers and move through the obstacles with ease. Our bodies have been freed. Now we must train our minds to believe it.

I Am free, hallelujah, I Am free!

January 9

You may not know how to raise your self-esteem, but you definitely know how to stop lowering it.

Awo Osun Kunle

Self-esteem is a sense of value and worth that comes from a positive self-image. Self-esteem begins with you and extends to all that you do. With the belief that your best is always good enough, no one but you can destroy your self-esteem. You destroy your esteem when you do not keep your word. When you do not honor the agreements and commitments you make. If you say "yes" when you really mean "no." When you don't follow your first thought. It does not matter what your environment may be. It is of little consequence what your past has been. It is not your concern what others may be saying or doing. It is only in your mind that you build and destroy your self-esteem.

I Am as great as I think I Am.

January 10

It thy right eye offends thee, pluck it out...

Matthew 5:29

The only way to eliminate stress and pain is to stop doing the things that create it. It is easy to see what others do to us while we forget the drama we create for ourselves. How? Take your pick: The need to be right. Lack of life purpose. How we think others see us. Trying to fix the world. Dishonesty with self and others. Accepting someone else's truth. Seeking material wealth over spiritual values. Doing it alone. My way is the right way. Fear of the future. Negative thought patterns. Trying to prove yourself to others. Anger over the past. Telling other people what to do. It all boils down to "not knowing who we are."

When I know me, I stop doing what's not good for me.

January 11

When you strengthen your self-esteem, there is no room for jealousy.

Dr. Harold Bloomfield

Jealousy is the surest way to get rid of the very person you are afraid of losing. When you say I love you, it means "I want the very best for you whether or not I am included." You must acknowledge any feelings of jealousy to understand what they are. Jealousy is a signpost of the longings in your subconscious mind. It reminds you that what you are longing is also longing you. There are only two emotions, love and fear. When jealousy comes up, stop and recognize that it is actually fear raising its ugly head. Fear of losing someone or something, fear that there is not enough. If you allow yourself to be jealous, you cannot love. It is important to acknowledge all your feelings and not beat yourself up for having them. Your feelings are not good or bad, they just are. Jealousy is simply reminding you that you are worthy of the best. When you remember who you are, the jealousy will dissolve and you will be ready to receive what you want.

I honor my feelings no matter what they are.

January 12

There's absolutely no way to save people from the things in their eyes. They must gather the courage to do it for themselves.

Alvin Lester Ben-Moring

Before we were indoctrinated to the rules of the world, with all its do's and don'ts, we were actually very receptive. We were willing to try new things, go into forbidden places and take risks without hesitation. We did not believe in unhappiness, defeat, rejection or lack. We asked for what we wanted and were willing to demand that it be provided. We thought the world existed to respond to our needs. It might do us well to revert back to the ways of childhood if we want to bring some good into our lives. It's not the temper tantrums or childish outbursts we want. It is the openness and freedom from limitation we need. We have been taught to accept fear, lack, sorrow and restriction as a part of everyday life. We are afraid to make demands of life because we believe we can't have what we want. We no longer feel free to express what we feel, when we feel it. Now, we want to be everyone's friend. If only we could think like a child again, there's a good chance we would find the freedom we gave up to become adults.

Today, I Am a child again.

January 13

Heaven is where you'll be when you are okay right where you are.

Sun Ra

Pretend for a moment that you are a mink -- beautiful, valuable, precious because of the skin that covers you. Suddenly your homeland is invaded by hunters, with bats. The hunters seem kind, yet you approach them cautiously. They pet the younglings who are innocent, less cautious. As you approach your young, the hunters attack. They beat you. You are dazed, struggling for composure. The hunters steal your skin, your heritage, the very essence of your being. They leave you to die, but you survive. Your fur grows back. Stronger. More beautiful than before. Somehow it doesn't make sense. The very thing that makes you who and what you are is the source of pain. Confused, distrustful, you hide yourself or camouflage your fur, your essence. Silently you begin to curse your fur, because the hunters return again and again. You begin to understand you will never get away from being what you are. As long as you have fur, you will be hunted. The issue is: Will you curse your fur, give up and die? Or just continue to be a proud but cautious mink?

I will not hide who or what I Am.

January 14

Successful people succeed because they learn from their failures.

Bettina Flores

The most difficult things to face in life are the things you do not like about yourself. Not your ears, legs, hair or those habits and abilities you feel are not up to par. It is the ugly little things you know about yourself that need a good long look. You recognize it when you see it in others, but you make excuses for yourself. You may go to any length to cover a shortcoming, while you quickly point out the ills of another. Since the very thing you want to hide is the thing that shows itself, you need to be able to say, "I know that and I'm working on it!" It takes a loving heart, a willing mind and a sensitive spirit to get to the core of the self. But when you do, you can root out the seeds of ugliness.

I acknowledge, accept and embrace everything about me.

January 15

We [must] realize that our future lies chiefly in our own hands.

Paul Robeson

If you can blame anyone for any condition in your life, then you, not they, are digging your grave. Your chief adversary comes to teach you a lesson. Your most difficult challenge strengthens your survival skills. Your greatest fear deepens your faith. Your weakest ability beckons you to grow. Anyone and anything can challenge you. It will not overtake you until you surrender. Only you can determine what you do and how you respond in a situation. It is your responsibility to make a decision about what is important to you; choose what you want and how you are going to get it. Once you accomplish that, it is your responsibility to move forward until you get it.

I Am taking a stand for me.

January 16

Sitting in a sacred place means you must sit alone.

Marilyn "Omi Funke" Torres

There are times when we each have sacred blessings to learn. These are the lessons that will push us to the limit of our greatness. At these times, it may seem that others are abandoning, rejecting or criticizing us without just cause. They are not. No matter how hard we try, we can't seem to do, say or be what others expect of us. We can't. The harder we try to pull others to us, the farther they move away. The more we try to fix things, the worse they seem to get. What we must do at these very sacred times is pull back, withdraw and prepare to grow. Our lessons are very sacred. They are the basic ingredient of our greatness. To accept them we must be open. To receive them we must be willing. To understand them we must be alone.

I Am sitting in a sacred place.

January 17

In the solitude of your mind are the answers to all your questions about life. You must take the time to ask and listen.

Bawa Mahaiyaddeen

There are times when we all feel as if we need to be alone. We just want to get away from everyone and everything and be alone. Sometimes we may feel guilty or selfish for thinking this way, but it is perfectly normal. To be alone is the best thing we can do for ourselves. To be alone means to be all one with the spirit within. When we are alone, we have an opportunity to get in touch with, to talk to and be guided by our power source. Spirit. To be alone means going to the essence of your being. To ask questions within and get clear, concise answers. To be alone means taking the time to give to yourself a small portion of what we have been giving of ourselves for so long. It is like drinking from the fountain of restoration to bring back your physical, mental and spiritual health. So go ahead. Tell them all and don't feel bad about saying it. "I want to be alone."

Today I Am all one with the spirit within.

January 18

I have never been contained except that I made the prison.

Mari Evans

When you concern yourself with doing only what others "think" you can do, you lay the floor of your prison. When you conform your activities based on what others might say, you put the bars around your prison. When you allow what others have done or are doing to determine what you can do, you build the roof of your prison. When you allow fear, competition or greed to guide your actions, you lock yourself up and throw away the key. It is our concern over what others say, do and think about us that imprisons our mind, body and spirit.

What other people think about me is not my concern.

January 19

In our deepest hour of need the Creator asks for no credentials.

Eulogy of Horace Harris

There are times when we feel bad about ourselves, what we've done and what we are facing. In these moments we may even believe we deserve to be punished, because we are "bad" or have done bad things. There are times when we feel so low, we convince ourselves that we don't matter and neither does anything or anyone else. That is when we usually start to think about God. Is there such a thing? Does God really care? Maybe if we had gone to God before, we wouldn't be where we are now. No matter. We're here, so let's go. This is a prime opportunity to make a new start, begin again and move on. The key is to remember that no matter where we've been, what we've done or how awful we feel right now, the One we may be running from knows exactly where we are. He has placed a light of peace in our hearts. A prayer will flip the switch.

I look within for all the answers I need.

January 20

You must learn how to make it on the broken pieces.

Rev. Louise Williams-Bishop

Ripped from their land; stripped of their culture, religion, name; beaten for rebelling and blamed for their state of existence, the descendants of the Africans have a right to feel broken. Being broken does not mean you are unequipped. There are enough pieces left for you to grab onto, hold onto and paddle your way to shore. Your life is the piece that equips you to have a goal. Your goal is the piece that will equip you with confidence. Your confidence is the piece that will give you persistence. Your persistence is the piece that will ensure your success. There are pieces from your parents, friends, even foes. There are pieces of books, songs and experience. More important, there are the pieces that well up from deep inside your being that will guide you surely and safely. Put them all together and hold on.

My pieces may be broken but I am going on anyhow.

Rev. Louise Williams-Bishop

January 21

You are as much as you are right now.

Yoruba proverb

We have such poor images of ourselves that we have difficulty understanding the good others see in us. When someone gives us a compliment, we are quick to point out what is wrong. When someone supports or encourages us, we remind them of our failures. We play ourselves down to such a degree that others begin to question the faith they have placed in us. This vicious cycle can only lower our already low self-esteem. Today is a good time to rethink our thoughts about ourselves. We can accept the compliments we receive when we give them to ourselves first. We can build our confidence by celebrating our small victories and successes. We can support the faith and trust others have in us by supporting and having faith in ourselves. It

all begins with our willingness to acknowledge that we are really fine, just the way we are.

I really am okay with me.r

God isn't alarmed when we hit rock bottom. He made the rock.

Baptist Minister

There are times in our lives when we feel there is no way up or out. Illness. Poverty. Confusion. Loneliness. Desperation. They take us to the place called "rock bottom." In these times you may feel weak and vulnerable, and it is easy to lose faith in your ability to go on. It is exactly in these times that you must turn to the infinite power within yourself. You must know that the answer is exactly where you are. The strength you need, the answer you want, the solution that will turn the situation around is you. If you can put aside the anger, fear, weakness and desperation for just a minute you will remember the "other times" you were at the bottom and how in a moment, miraculously, you were lifted up.

There is no spot where God is not.

January 23

Ask, and it shall be given you...

Matthew 7:7

We all get to a point where we feel confused and indecisive. We can't seem to figure out what we want or what to do. We want everything, but nothing brings satisfaction. Our spirit is restless because the mind is racing. It may not be that we don't know, it is probably that we are afraid to ask. We may feel as if we are running to something, but actually we are running away. In those times we need to sit down, get still and evaluate just what it is we want. We must do this quietly, honestly and often, if necessary. We are human beings, blessed with the power of reason. We have, at all times, the right and the power to figure out what we want. Once that's done, we must have the courage to ask for it. If we let the color of our skin, the gender we express or the ways of the world limit us, we will forever be denied. We owe it to ourselves to choose a way and ask for it. Once we ask, we can rest.

Today I plan to choose and ask with an open mind.

January 24

For no man can be blessed without the acceptance of his own head.

Yoruba proverb

The wise Africans knew and understood the power of the mind. People can only be as good as their thoughts, as successful as mental patterns, as progressive as their ideas. Africans did not rely on books, relative theories or postulative quotations. They listened to their thoughts, prayed for divine guidance, followed the intuitive urging. Education, money, fame and notoriety were considered as useful as dirty dishwater without a clear, firm, focused mind. Their process was simple. They developed a strong faith and connection to the Creator. A healthy love and respect for their ancestors and parents. A commitment and dedication to the traditions of their family. And a trusting relationship to the spirit of their own head. Trust your head and your

first thought regardless of what others may say. Your head takes you to the places you want to go.

I bless the spirit of my head.

January 25

Check out your own B.S.

Jewel Diamond-Taylor

B.S. refers to Belief System -- those things you hold to be true about yourself and others. Your B.S. is a product of your experiences and perceptions. Those things you have come to believe are true. Those things buried in the back of your mind. But are they really buried? No! Your belief system determines your environment, your abilities and the way you approach life's experiences. What do you really believe about yourself? What do you believe about your ability to have, to be and to do all the things you hold dear in your heart? If you really want to know what you believe, take a look at the people, conditions and situations in your immediate environment. They are the reflection of your own B.S.

I Am a true believer in the best about me.

January 26

It takes a deep commitment to change and an even deeper commitment to grow.

Ralph Ellison

When you know you are thinking, saying or doing things that are unhealthy or unproductive, you must do more than know. There must be a genuine, loving support for the "self" to make a change. Change does not mean replacing one bad habit for another. It does not mean beating up on yourself or feeling guilty or ashamed. Change means voluntarily removing yourself from the people and environment that support you in remaining unhealthy. Change means identifying what you are doing, recognizing when you are doing it and gently guiding yourself to do something else. Change means not making excuses for yourself, but doing exactly what you say you will do. When you support yourself in making needed changes, you are supporting your own growth. Growth is the commitment to being, doing and having the best.

I Am growing by thoughts, words and deeds.

January 27

There are two things over which you have complete dominion, authority and control -- your mind and your mouth.

Molefi Asante

Your mind is an instrument. A precious gift to be valued and cared for. You are not always in control of what goes into your mind, but only you can determine what stays there. If you allow negativity to pervade in your mind, you will produce that negativity with your mouth. Your mouth is the mechanism that reveals how well you care for your mind. The conditions in your life stem from the most dominant thoughts of which you speak. Nothing has a hold on your mind that you cannot break free of. Since your mind will respond to what

is said to you, speak to the conditions in your life. When they are wanted, give thanks. When they are unwanted, demand they change.

I Am in control of my mind and mouth.

January 28

You've got the right one, baby! Uh-huh!

As performed by Ray Charles

You are the only one who can do it like you do it. You are the best. You have what it takes. You've got juice. You've got the power. You and only you have what you have, and nobody can take that away from you. You come from the best, the beginning, the source. You are destined to be great. You inherited a legacy of success from those who came before you. They knew you could do it, too! You are the light in life. You light up the world. You make life worth living. You can't lose with the stuff you use. You are the beginning and the end of the phenomena called you. You are the one who makes the bed. You call the shots. You stand heads above the crowd. They can't hold a candle to you. When you put your mind to something, you get it done. So what are you waiting for?

I Am the you that can do it.

January 29

If you don't sell your head, no one will buy it.

Yoruba proverb

We are capable of directing and determining the outcome of any and every situation we face through the power of thought. Yet since many of us do not realize our true power, we cannot realize the truth of the statement: "No one can do anything or make you do anything unless you let them." The key is to be honest with yourself and others at all times, keep your thoughts focused on the best possible outcome for everyone involved and never allow yourself to be pushed where you don't choose to be. If someone called you a grape, you probably wouldn't respond. But if that same person refers to you as a coon or spade, you would most likely hold them responsible for your reaction. No one but you can ever be held accountable for what you do. How you respond in any given situation is purely a reflection of what you think -- what is in your head. When someone does or says something you believe is offensive, do yourself a favor -- don't sell your head.

It's what's inside my head that counts.

January 30

Ford got a better idea, you can get one too.

Linda Green Beatty

The things our parents tell us, the things we read in books, the things we hear and overhear create the foundation of our thoughts. These thoughts grow into ideas. For many people of color, the ideas they have about themselves are not good. There is the idea that it is hard for Black people to make it. This is supported

by the idea that Black people don't try. There is the idea that other people are preferred over Black people. This gives birth to the idea that Black people are not good enough. There is the idea that Black men aren't respected. This comes from the idea that Black women have abandoned Black men. The idea is that because there is so much conflict between Black men and Black women, Black children are lost. The thing we seem to forget is that an idea will die unless it is acted upon. Everytime we entertain the truth of false ideas we give it the right to live. If an idea is not of your making or liking, you can choose to have a better one.

I believe in my right to have unlimited goodness in my life.

January 31

The mind is and always will be our primary business.

Dr. Benjamin Mays

There are times when it is difficult to make sense of the experiences we have in life. How are we to get ahead without money? How are we to overcome intangible obstacles? How are we to move through the challenges, difficulties and limitations we face at every turn? It may seem that no matter how hard you try, something or someone is there to block you. In those times remember the words of Dr. Benjamin Mays:

It is not your environment;

It is not your history;

It is not your education or ability;

It is the quality of your mind that predicts

your future.

I take the time to develop my own mind.

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Most helpful customer reviews

17 of 17 people found the following review helpful.

Inspirational

By Y. Kenton

This book has inspired me. I have found several meditations that apply whole heartedly to my life. I have retyped and copied several of the quotes and taped them to my refrigerator or put them on my bulletin board at work. This is a book I needed years ago.

This book has given me insight and inspiration on several different topics. Since I bought it a few years ago, I have yet to put it down. I'm always reading this. I have become more pleasant in certain circumstance because of something I've read here.

For anybody facing lifes highs and lows or debating whether or not to start meditating this book is one you should have. It's so nice to have a book that focuses on the daily ins and outs of being a person of color.

25 of 28 people found the following review helpful.

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By A Customer

I am not a lady of color and I love this book. This book is for everyone. I keep my copy at work and start my day with it. One of the best things is you can keep reading it forever, or go to a section that will uplift you when you need it. I really enjoy my copy and thank her for writing it. I am glad the title didn't stop me from buying it.

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ACTS OF FAITH

By Mary Allen

This book, **ACTS OF FAITH**, is a year-long daily meditation guide. Each day is led off by a quote or bible verse. The soothing style of the writings makes the reader feel good. They lessen confusion and ease troubled minds. It's very spiritual.

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ACTS OF FAITH: DAILY MEDITATIONS FOR PEOPLE OF COLOR BY IYANLA VANZANT PDF

Yeah, reviewing an e-book **Acts Of Faith: Daily Meditations For People Of Color By Iyanla Vanzant** could add your good friends lists. This is just one of the solutions for you to be effective. As recognized, success does not imply that you have excellent things. Recognizing and also knowing greater than various other will certainly provide each success. Close to, the notification and also perception of this Acts Of Faith: Daily Meditations For People Of Color By Iyanla Vanzant could be taken and also chosen to act.

Review

Molefi Kete Asante Professor and Chair, Department of African-American Studies, Temple University Acts of Faith is a dazzling collection of meditative statements. It should be a standard work for a long time. Iyanla Vanzant has found a way to help us keep body and soul whole.

Linda Villarosa Senior Editor, Essence magazine Acts of Faith is an important spiritual resource for African-Americans and other people of all colors.

About the Author

With more than 8 million books in print, Iyanla Vanzant has truly established a dedicated fan base. Iyanla's path to success took her through a multitude of life-changing experiences that shaped the profound insights she eagerly shares with others. A neglected, overweight, sexually abused child who was shuttled from one family to another, she became a teenage mother on welfare living in the projects of a major urban city. Vanzant took control of her life when she walked out of her second abusive marriage and entered Medgar Evers College in New York and then the City University of New York Law School. She moved to Philadelphia with her children and became a public defender for three years. Then she eventually became an ordained minister, who was committed to a message based on the principles of divine power and self-determination.

Iyanla combined her professional skills with her life's lessons and embarked on a writing and speaking career. Her mass appeal is evident in her overwhelming success as an author. In the Meantime was a #1 New York Times bestseller, where it spent 20 weeks on the list, and she has had numerous other major bestsellers. As a nationally recognized speaker she has sold out such prestigious venues as New York's Jacob Javits Convention Center, Nashville's Grand Ole Opry, Atlanta's Civic Center, and the Wiltern Theater in Los Angeles. Vanzant is also familiar to the daytime TV audience from her role as a regular contributor on "The Oprah Winfrey Show."

Acclaimed journalist and producer Barbara Walters recognized Vanzant's extraordinary appeal, seeing in her a "breakaway talent" with the potential for huge success in daytime television. With Walters and partner Bill Geddie on board to executive produce, Buena Vista Productions to develop the show, and Buena Vista Television as distributor, the road to Iyanla was forged.

Vanzant has received numerous accolades for her work. In 1992 Los Angeles mayor Tom Bradley named October 21st "Tapping the Power Within Day" in honor of a workshop she presented in that city for African-American women. In 1994, the National Association of Equal Opportunity in Education, an organization comprised of the presidents and administrators of the 117 predominantly Black colleges in the United States

named her Alumni of the Year. She also was awarded an "Oni" by the International Congress of Black Women as one of the nation's unsung heroes, and she served as the national spokesperson for Literacy Volunteers of America in 1998.

In 1999 she was listed among the 100 Most Influential African-Americans by Ebony magazine. Later that year, she was awarded the 31st NAACP Image Award for "Outstanding Literary Work, Non-Fiction" for Yesterday I Cried. She also earned her first Honorary Doctorate degree, Doctor of Humane Letters, from the City University of New York, Medgar Evars College. In 2000, she earned her second honorary degree, Doctor of Divinity, from the Theological Seminary in Atlanta, Georgia. In addition, Ebony has named her one of their "55 Most Intriguing People," Vibe magazine tabbed her one of "100 Leaders of the New Millennium" and Newsweek recently included her as one of the "Women of the New Century."

The mother of three and grandmother of four, Vanzant lives in Silver Spring, Maryland with her husband Adeyemi and Mr. Coco, their cat.

To learn how Iyanla can help you get started on your journey toward spiritual enlightenment, visit Inner Visions Worldwide, Inc., at www.innervisionsworldwide.com.

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Chapter 1

January 1

There is a power greater than myself who loves me exactly as I Am.

The stress began the day you learned you were expected to please other people. Parents wanted you to stay clean and be quiet. Neighbors wanted you to be respectful and helpful. Teachers wanted you to be attentive and alert. Friends wanted you to share and hang out. Whenever you failed to do exactly what someone expected of you, you weren't good, or good enough. You were bad, weak or dumb. Unfortunately, you began to believe it. Giving in to the demands, day by day, you lost a little more of yourself and your understanding of the truth. The truth is you are fine, just the way you are! Perfect in your imperfection! You are divine! Growing brighter and more brilliant each day, you can accept the truth of who you are. The next time you want to know who you are, what you are or if something is the right thing to do, don't ask your neighbor -- ask the power within...and pay attention to the response!

The divine power within knows exactly who I Am!

January 2

Our hearts are the wrapping which preserve God's word, we need no more.

The Koran, Sura 4:155

When was the last time you sat down to have a heart to heart with yourself? Have you really examined your heart lately? Are you harboring childhood wounds? Are you still nursing a broken heart? Are you frightened? Angry? Guilty or ashamed? Is there someone you need to apologize to? Who have you forgiven lately? If God were to speak through your heart today, what would you hear? In the everyday quest to get through life, we sometimes forget we really do have all we need. It's tucked away safely inside of us. It

contributes to our thoughts and motivates our actions. If we clear it out it will actually speak to us and tell us exactly what to do. When was the last time you had a heart to heart with yourself?

With a pure heart, I am balanced in life.

January 3

Don't be afraid to look at your faults.

Yoruba proverb

Even though we know there is always room for improvement, we tend to shy away from criticism. Our egos tell us we are being attacked and quite naturally we want to strike back. In order to be whole, healthy beings, we need to know all there is to know about ourselves. Sometimes that information must come from others. This may mean admitting that we are not always right, and knowing it is okay to make a mistake. A mistake, an error, a poor choice, or bad decision does not equal "there is something wrong with me." It means you are on your way to being better. We do not make mistakes on the basis of race or color. We make them because we are human. When we acknowledge our errors and face up to our shortcomings, no one can use them against us.

I Am not afraid to admit when I am wrong.

January 4

Take a day to heal from the lies you've told yourself and the ones that have been told to you.

Maya Angelou

There comes a time when we have to pause to listen to what we are telling ourselves -- "I'm so stupid," "I'm broke," "I don't know how," "I can't take it anymore..." Yet in the midst of our dishonest chatter we are making great strides, accomplishing many tasks, overcoming seemingly insurmountable odds. We can't see it because we keep lying to ourselves. We lie because we've been lied to -- "You're no good," "You can't do it," "You'll never make it," "How do you think you're gonna do that..." We can't think because there are so many lies running loose in our minds. The only way to eradicate a lie is with the truth. We must not only speak the truth, we must think in truth. The truth is, we start from a place where success is born, in the mind's eye of the Most High. The truth is that no one has ever made a true deal with the Master and lost.

The truth springs forth from my mind.

January 5

STOP!

Most of us know exactly what it is that creates the pain, confusion, stagnation and disruption in our lives. Whether it is a habit, behavior, relationship or fear, we know. Unfortunately, we seem powerless to stop whatever it is. Sometimes we believe we don't have the discipline or willpower to stop. The behavior becomes so habitual we do it without thinking. Other times we know exactly what it is and what we do, but we simply keep doing it anyway. We are the only ones responsible for what goes on in our lives. We can make excuses and blame others, but we are responsible to and for ourselves. When we find something or

someone creating in our lives that which we do not want, we must muster the courage and strength to stop it.

Today I use my power to stop what is no longer good to me.

January 6

You've got to get the mind cleared out before you put the truth in it.

Minister Louis Farrakhan

Everyone has something they are ashamed of, afraid of or that they feel guilty about. Each of us in our own way will devise a neat little method of handling it. Some of us deny. Some of us blame. Some of us do a combination of both. Undoubtedly the day will come when we will be forced to examine that which we have tucked away. We can willingly begin the process of examination by telling the truth to ourselves about ourselves. We all have the right to make mistakes. Our fault is being righteous about it. When we fail to admit our faults, the faults become what everyone can see. When we refuse to admit what we have done in the past, we block our path to the future. No matter how terrible we think we are, how bad we believe we have been, how low we think we have fallen, we can clean out our minds and begin again.

The only way out is truth.

January 7

Do not wish to be anything but what you are, and to be that perfectly.

St. Francis De Sales

A minister friend of mine once told me, "On the seventh day God rested." He said, "It is good and very good." Then we come along and try to improve on perfection. For people of color, the most damaging habit we have is trying to be who and what we are not. We expend so much energy trying to fix who we are, we rarely get to really know ourselves. If we truly realized how precious the gift of life is, we would not waste a moment trying to improve it. If we really understood how precious we are to the gift of life, we would not waste time trying to fix ourselves. It's not about what we look like or what we have. It's not about fixing our face, body or lives. It's about taking what we have and doing as much as we can with it. It's about learning and growing. When we are willing to learn what we don't know and use our experiences, our perfection will begin to show.

I accept me as I Am.

January 8

Know thy ideal and live for that. For each soul must give an account for its own self.

Paramhansa Yogananda

Everything that happens to us, and every choice we make, is a reflection of what we believe about ourselves. We cannot outperform our level of self-esteem. We cannot draw to ourselves more than we believe we are worth. The things we believe and say about ourselves come back to us in many ways. Self-motivation comes from self-knowledge. We must inspire ourselves by believing we have the power to accomplish everything

we set out to do. We must put faith in our ability to use mind and spirit and picture our lives the way we want them to be. We must use inner strength and the power of our being to tear down the walls, break through the barriers and move through the obstacles with ease. Our bodies have been freed. Now we must train our minds to believe it.

I Am free, hallelujah, I Am free!

January 9

You may not know how to raise your self-esteem, but you definitely know how to stop lowering it.

Awo Osun Kunle

Self-esteem is a sense of value and worth that comes from a positive self-image. Self-esteem begins with you and extends to all that you do. With the belief that your best is always good enough, no one but you can destroy your self-esteem. You destroy your esteem when you do not keep your word. When you do not honor the agreements and commitments you make. If you say "yes" when you really mean "no." When you don't follow your first thought. It does not matter what your environment may be. It is of little consequence what your past has been. It is not your concern what others may be saying or doing. It is only in your mind that you build and destroy your self-esteem.

I Am as great as I think I Am.

January 10

It thy right eye offends thee, pluck it out...

Matthew 5:29

The only way to eliminate stress and pain is to stop doing the things that create it. It is easy to see what others do to us while we forget the drama we create for ourselves. How? Take your pick: The need to be right. Lack of life purpose. How we think others see us. Trying to fix the world. Dishonesty with self and others. Accepting someone else's truth. Seeking material wealth over spiritual values. Doing it alone. My way is the right way. Fear of the future. Negative thought patterns. Trying to prove yourself to others. Anger over the past. Telling other people what to do. It all boils down to "not knowing who we are."

When I know me, I stop doing what's not good for me.

January 11

When you strengthen your self-esteem, there is no room for jealousy.

Dr. Harold Bloomfield

Jealousy is the surest way to get rid of the very person you are afraid of losing. When you say I love you, it means "I want the very best for you whether or not I am included." You must acknowledge any feelings of jealousy to understand what they are. Jealousy is a signpost of the longings in your subconscious mind. It reminds you that what you are longing is also longing you. There are only two emotions, love and fear. When jealousy comes up, stop and recognize that it is actually fear raising its ugly head. Fear of losing

someone or something, fear that there is not enough. If you allow yourself to be jealous, you cannot love. It is important to acknowledge all your feelings and not beat yourself up for having them. Your feelings are not good or bad, they just are. Jealousy is simply reminding you that you are worthy of the best. When you remember who you are, the jealousy will dissolve and you will be ready to receive what you want.

I honor my feelings no matter what they are.

January 12

There's absolutely no way to save people from the things in their eyes. They must gather the courage to do it for themselves.

Alvin Lester Ben-Moring

Before we were indoctrinated to the rules of the world, with all its do's and don'ts, we were actually very receptive. We were willing to try new things, go into forbidden places and take risks without hesitation. We did not believe in unhappiness, defeat, rejection or lack. We asked for what we wanted and were willing to demand that it be provided. We thought the world existed to respond to our needs. It might do us well to revert back to the ways of childhood if we want to bring some good into our lives. It's not the temper tantrums or childish outbursts we want. It is the openness and freedom from limitation we need. We have been taught to accept fear, lack, sorrow and restriction as a part of everyday life. We are afraid to make demands of life because we believe we can't have what we want. We no longer feel free to express what we feel, when we feel it. Now, we want to be everyone's friend. If only we could think like a child again, there's a good chance we would find the freedom we gave up to become adults.

Today, I Am a child again.

January 13

Heaven is where you'll be when you are okay right where you are.

Sun Ra

Pretend for a moment that you are a mink -- beautiful, valuable, precious because of the skin that covers you. Suddenly your homeland is invaded by hunters, with bats. The hunters seem kind, yet you approach them cautiously. They pet the younglings who are innocent, less cautious. As you approach your young, the hunters attack. They beat you. You are dazed, struggling for composure. The hunters steal your skin, your heritage, the very essence of your being. They leave you to die, but you survive. Your fur grows back. Stronger. More beautiful than before. Somehow it doesn't make sense. The very thing that makes you who and what you are is the source of pain. Confused, distrustful, you hide yourself or camouflage your fur, your essence. Silently you begin to curse your fur, because the hunters return again and again. You begin to understand you will never get away from being what you are. As long as you have fur, you will be hunted. The issue is: Will you curse your fur, give up and die? Or just continue to be a proud but cautious mink?

I will not hide who or what I Am.

January 14

Successful people succeed because they learn from their failures.

Bettina Flores

The most difficult things to face in life are the things you do not like about yourself. Not your ears, legs, hair or those habits and abilities you feel are not up to par. It is the ugly little things you know about yourself that need a good long look. You recognize it when you see it in others, but you make excuses for yourself. You may go to any length to cover a shortcoming, while you quickly point out the ills of another. Since the very thing you want to hide is the thing that shows itself, you need to be able to say, "I know that and I'm working on it!" It takes a loving heart, a willing mind and a sensitive spirit to get to the core of the self. But when you do, you can root out the seeds of ugliness.

I acknowledge, accept and embrace everything about me.

January 15

We [must] realize that our future lies chiefly in our own hands.

Paul Robeson

If you can blame anyone for any condition in your life, then you, not they, are digging your grave. Your chief adversary comes to teach you a lesson. Your most difficult challenge strengthens your survival skills. Your greatest fear deepens your faith. Your weakest ability beckons you to grow. Anyone and anything can challenge you. It will not overtake you until you surrender. Only you can determine what you do and how you respond in a situation. It is your responsibility to make a decision about what is important to you; choose what you want and how you are going to get it. Once you accomplish that, it is your responsibility to move forward until you get it.

I Am taking a stand for me.

January 16

Sitting in a sacred place means you must sit alone.

Marilyn "Omi Funke" Torres

There are times when we each have sacred blessings to learn. These are the lessons that will push us to the limit of our greatness. At these times, it may seem that others are abandoning, rejecting or criticizing us without just cause. They are not. No matter how hard we try, we can't seem to do, say or be what others expect of us. We can't. The harder we try to pull others to us, the farther they move away. The more we try to fix things, the worse they seem to get. What we must do at these very sacred times is pull back, withdraw and prepare to grow. Our lessons are very sacred. They are the basic ingredient of our greatness. To accept them we must be open. To receive them we must be willing. To understand them we must be alone.

I Am sitting in a sacred place.

January 17

In the solitude of your mind are the answers to all your questions about life. You must take the time to ask and listen.

Bawa Mahaiyaddeen

There are times when we all feel as if we need to be alone. We just want to get away from everyone and everything and be alone. Sometimes we may feel guilty or selfish for thinking this way, but it is perfectly normal. To be alone is the best thing we can do for ourselves. To be alone means to be all one with the spirit within. When we are alone, we have an opportunity to get in touch with, to talk to and be guided by our power source. Spirit. To be alone means going to the essence of your being. To ask questions within and get clear, concise answers. To be alone means taking the time to give to yourself a small portion of what we have been giving of ourselves for so long. It is like drinking from the fountain of restoration to bring back your physical, mental and spiritual health. So go ahead. Tell them all and don't feel bad about saying it. "I want to be alone."

Today I Am all one with the spirit within.

January 18

I have never been contained except that I made the prison.

Mari Evans

When you concern yourself with doing only what others "think" you can do, you lay the floor of your prison. When you conform your activities based on what others might say, you put the bars around your prison. When you allow what others have done or are doing to determine what you can do, you build the roof of your prison. When you allow fear, competition or greed to guide your actions, you lock yourself up and throw away the key. It is our concern over what others say, do and think about us that imprisons our mind, body and spirit.

What other people think about me is not my concern.

January 19

In our deepest hour of need the Creator asks for no credentials.

Eulogy of Horace Harris

There are times when we feel bad about ourselves, what we've done and what we are facing. In these moments we may even believe we deserve to be punished, because we are "bad" or have done bad things. There are times when we feel so low, we convince ourselves that we don't matter and neither does anything or anyone else. That is when we usually start to think about God. Is there such a thing? Does God really care? Maybe if we had gone to God before, we wouldn't be where we are now. No matter. We're here, so let's go. This is a prime opportunity to make a new start, begin again and move on. The key is to remember that no matter where we've been, what we've done or how awful we feel right now, the One we may be running from knows exactly where we are. He has placed a light of peace in our hearts. A prayer will flip the switch.

I look within for all the answers I need.

January 20

You must learn how to make it on the broken pieces.

Rev. Louise Williams-Bishop

Ripped from their land; stripped of their culture, religion, name; beaten for rebelling and blamed for their state of existence, the descendants of the Africans have a right to feel broken. Being broken does not mean you are unequipped. There are enough pieces left for you to grab onto, hold onto and paddle your way to shore. Your life is the piece that equips you to have a goal. Your goal is the piece that will equip you with confidence. Your confidence is the piece that will give you persistence. Your persistence is the piece that will ensure your success. There are pieces from your parents, friends, even foes. There are pieces of books, songs and experience. More important, there are the pieces that well up from deep inside your being that will guide you surely and safely. Put them all together and hold on.

My pieces may be broken but I am going on anyhow.

Rev. Louise Williams-Bishop

January 21

You are as much as you are right now.

Yoruba proverb

We have such poor images of ourselves that we have difficulty understanding the good others see in us. When someone gives us a compliment, we are quick to point out what is wrong. When someone supports or encourages us, we remind them of our failures. We play ourselves down to such a degree that others begin to question the faith they have placed in us. This vicious cycle can only lower our already low self-esteem. Today is a good time to rethink our thoughts about ourselves. We can accept the compliments we receive when we give them to ourselves first. We can build our confidence by celebrating our small victories and successes. We can support the faith and trust others have in us by supporting and having faith in ourselves. It all begins with our willingness to acknowledge that we are really fine, just the way we are.

I really am okay with me.

God isn't alarmed when we hit rock bottom. He made the rock.

Baptist Minister

There are times in our lives when we feel there is no way up or out. Illness. Poverty. Confusion. Loneliness. Desperation. They take us to the place called "rock bottom." In these times you may feel weak and vulnerable, and it is easy to lose faith in your ability to go on. It is exactly in these times that you must turn to the infinite power within yourself. You must know that the answer is exactly where you are. The strength you need, the answer you want, the solution that will turn the situation around is you. If you can put aside the anger, fear, weakness and desperation for just a minute you will remember the "other times" you were at the bottom and how in a moment, miraculously, you were lifted up.

There is no spot where God is not.

January 23

Ask, and it shall be given you...

Matthew 7:7

We all get to a point where we feel confused and indecisive. We can't seem to figure out what we want or what to do. We want everything, but nothing brings satisfaction. Our spirit is restless because the mind is racing. It may not be that we don't know, it is probably that we are afraid to ask. We may feel as if we are running to something, but actually we are running away. In those times we need to sit down, get still and evaluate just what it is we want. We must do this quietly, honestly and often, if necessary. We are human beings, blessed with the power of reason. We have, at all times, the right and the power to figure out what we want. Once that's done, we must have the courage to ask for it. If we let the color of our skin, the gender we express or the ways of the world limit us, we will forever be denied. We owe it to ourselves to choose a way and ask for it. Once we ask, we can rest.

Today I plan to choose and ask with an open mind.

January 24

For no man can be blessed without the acceptance of his own head.

Yoruba proverb

The wise Africans knew and understood the power of the mind. People can only be as good as their thoughts, as successful as mental patterns, as progressive as their ideas. Africans did not rely on books, relative theories or postulative quotations. They listened to their thoughts, prayed for divine guidance, followed the intuitive urging. Education, money, fame and notoriety were considered as useful as dirty dishwater without a clear, firm, focused mind. Their process was simple. They developed a strong faith and connection to the Creator. A healthy love and respect for their ancestors and parents. A commitment and dedication to the traditions of their family. And a trusting relationship to the spirit of their own head. Trust your head and your first thought regardless of what others may say. Your head takes you to the places you want to go.

I bless the spirit of my head.

January 25

Check out your own B.S.

Jewel Diamond-Taylor

B.S. refers to Belief System -- those things you hold to be true about yourself and others. Your B.S. is a product of your experiences and perceptions. Those things you have come to believe are true. Those things buried in the back of your mind. But are they really buried? No! Your belief system determines your environment, your abilities and the way you approach life's experiences. What do you really believe about yourself? What do you believe about your ability to have, to be and to do all the things you hold dear in your heart? If you really want to know what you believe, take a look at the people, conditions and situations in your immediate environment. They are the reflection of your own B.S.

I Am a true believer in the best about me.

January 26

It takes a deep commitment to change and an even deeper commitment to grow.

Ralph Ellison

When you know you are thinking, saying or doing things that are unhealthy or unproductive, you must do more than know. There must be a genuine, loving support for the "self" to make a change. Change does not mean replacing one bad habit for another. It does not mean beating up on yourself or feeling guilty or ashamed. Change means voluntarily removing yourself from the people and environment that support you in remaining unhealthy. Change means identifying what you are doing, recognizing when you are doing it and gently guiding yourself to do something else. Change means not making excuses for yourself, but doing exactly what you say you will do. When you support yourself in making needed changes, you are supporting your own growth. Growth is the commitment to being, doing and having the best.

I Am growing by thoughts, words and deeds.

January 27

There are two things over which you have complete dominion, authority and control -- your mind and your mouth.

Molefi Asante

Your mind is an instrument. A precious gift to be valued and cared for. You are not always in control of what goes into your mind, but only you can determine what stays there. If you allow negativity to pervade in your mind, you will produce that negativity with your mouth. Your mouth is the mechanism that reveals how well you care for your mind. The conditions in your life stem from the most dominant thoughts of which you speak. Nothing has a hold on your mind that you cannot break free of. Since your mind will respond to what is said to you, speak to the conditions in your life. When they are wanted, give thanks. When they are unwanted, demand they change.

I Am in control of my mind and mouth.

January 28

You've got the right one, baby! Uh-huh!

As performed by Ray Charles

You are the only one who can do it like you do it. You are the best. You have what it takes. You've got juice. You've got the power. You and only you have what you have, and nobody can take that away from you. You come from the best, the beginning, the source. You are destined to be great. You inherited a legacy of success from those who came before you. They knew you could do it, too! You are the light in life. You light up the world. You make life worth living. You can't lose with the stuff you use. You are the beginning and the end of the phenomena called you. You are the one who makes the bed. You call the shots. You stand heads above the crowd. They can't hold a candle to you. When you put your mind to something, you get it done. So what are you waiting for?

I Am the you that can do it.

January 29

If you don't sell your head, no one will buy it.

Yoruba proverb

We are capable of directing and determining the outcome of any and every situation we face through the power of thought. Yet since many of us do not realize our true power, we cannot realize the truth of the statement: "No one can do anything or make you do anything unless you let them." The key is to be honest with yourself and others at all times, keep your thoughts focused on the best possible outcome for everyone involved and never allow yourself to be pushed where you don't choose to be. If someone called you a grape, you probably wouldn't respond. But if that same person refers to you as a coon or spade, you would most likely hold them responsible for your reaction. No one but you can ever be held accountable for what you do. How you respond in any given situation is purely a reflection of what you think -- what is in your head. When someone does or says something you believe is offensive, do yourself a favor -- don't sell your head.

It's what's inside my head that counts.

January 30

Ford got a better idea, you can get one too.

Linda Green Beatty

The things our parents tell us, the things we read in books, the things we hear and overhear create the foundation of our thoughts. These thoughts grow into ideas. For many people of color, the ideas they have about themselves are not good. There is the idea that it is hard for Black people to make it. This is supported by the idea that Black people don't try. There is the idea that other people are preferred over Black people. This gives birth to the idea that Black people are not good enough. There is the idea that Black men aren't respected. This comes from the idea that Black women have abandoned Black men. The idea is that because there is so much conflict between Black men and Black women, Black children are lost. The thing we seem to forget is that an idea will die unless it is acted upon. Everytime we entertain the truth of false ideas we give it the right to live. If an idea is not of your making or liking, you can choose to have a better one.

I believe in my right to have unlimited goodness in my life.

January 31

The mind is and always will be our primary business.

Dr. Benjamin Mays

There are times when it is difficult to make sense of the experiences we have in life. How are we to get ahead without money? How are we to overcome intangible obstacles? How are we to move through the challenges, difficulties and limitations we face at every turn? It may seem that no matter how hard you try, something or someone is there to block you. In those times remember the words of Dr. Benjamin Mays:

It is not your environment;

It is not your history;

It is not your education or ability;

It is the quality of your mind that predicts

your future.

I take the time to develop my own mind.

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