

Desiderata

written by Max Ehrmann in the 1920s

Go placidly amid the noise and the haste,
and remember what peace there
may be in silence.

As far as possible, without
surrender,
be on good terms with all persons.
Speak your truth quietly and
clearly;
and listen to others,
even to the dull and the ignorant;
they too have their story.
Avoid loud and aggressive
persons;
they are vexatious to the spirit.

If you compare yourself with
others,
you may become vain or bitter,
for always there will be greater
and lesser persons than yourself.
Enjoy your achievements as well
as your plans.
Keep interested in your own
career, however humble;
it is a real possession in the
changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business
affairs,
for the world is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what
virtue there is;
many persons strive for high
ideals,
and everywhere life is full of
heroism.
Be yourself. Especially do not
feign affection.
Neither be cynical about love, for

in the face of all aridity and
disenchantment,
it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the
years,
gracefully surrendering the things
of youth.
Nurture strength of spirit to shield
you in sudden misfortune.
But do not distress yourself with
dark imaginings.
Many fears are born of fatigue and
loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline,
be gentle with yourself.
You are a child of the universe
no less than the trees and the stars;
you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to
you,
no doubt the universe is unfolding
as it should.

Therefore be at peace with God,
whatever you conceive Him to be.
And whatever your labours and
aspirations,
in the noisy confusion of life,
keep peace in your soul.

With all its sham, drudgery, and
broken dreams,
it is still a beautiful world.
Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.