



Inspirational Quotes – ‘Inbox Insights’

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Inbox Insights makes *inspirational quotes* **real**.

Have you ever noticed that you can feel inspired by a quote you read, and then a few minutes later, you can't even remember what it said?

No matter how **inspiring** or **motivating**, inspirational quotes need to be **absorbed** for them to affect you for more than a moment.

Each quote within Inbox Insights contains one or two inspiring quotes plus a unique insight into how you can use their message to be more **effective**, **successful** and **happy** in everyday life.

PLUS, the **questions** at the end of each insight are designed to make you think, and so aid **real absorption** of the principles and ideas behind the inspirational quotes.

Inbox Insight No. 1 – Enthusiasm

QUOTE

“Every great and commanding movement in the annals of the world is the triumph of enthusiasm. Nothing great was ever achieved without it.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 19th Century American author and poet.

INSIGHT

To get somewhere, you need power, an engine, a powerhouse to deliver energy.

So many people these days are pessimistic, negative or critical. Exposing your ideas and dreams to this kind of attitude can take all the energy out of them.

Why not keep them secret for a while? A secret is a powerful thing.

Look at people around you who are enthusiastic. Being enthusiastic doesn't mean NEVER being critical; it simply means knowing WHEN to be critical.

A new baby needs to be looked after and cosseted before it is exposed to the world - the same is true of an idea.

Keep a new idea within you for a while and you will amaze yourself at your abilities and creativity. Tell the world too early and they may pull it apart in front of your eyes.

QUESTION

Who do you know that seems to be happy and enthusiastic? Or who achieves a lot?

How do they do it?

If you don't know, why not ask them?

Inbox Insight No. 2 – Courage

QUOTE

“A great deal of talent is lost to the world for want of a little courage. Every day sends to their graves obscure men whom timidity prevented from making a first effort.”

Sydney Smith, 18th Century English clergyman

INSIGHT

These days, courage seems like an 'old-fashioned' idea.

We are constantly bombarded with messages that say life should be cosseted, antiseptic and risk-free.

However, when you think about the things you have done, or that your friends have achieved, somewhere along the way you'll usually find a little bravery, often leading to a breakthrough or achievement.

Now it's easy to think “I've never done anything brave or courageous”, but there was a time you experimented with your first words, or stood up for the first time. When you were scared to venture an opinion, but did it anyway.

Those were brave things to do. There's no reason you can't approach life with that kind of attitude at 20, 30, 40 or 90. Why shouldn't you?

QUESTION

What things can you remember doing that now seem scary?

How does it make you feel when you realise that you actually did it?

What sort of things could you apply that child-like attitude to now?

Inbox Insight No. 3 – Positive Thinking

QUOTE

“Be not afraid of life. Believe that life is worth living, and your belief will help you create the fact.”

William James, 19th Century psychologist

INSIGHT

It seems to be a common mistake that people want to wait until 'things are good' before feeling happy, or satisfied.

When you consider the fact that there are many people in the World in comparatively awful circumstance who are happy, this mistake becomes apparent.

(If you consider yourself to be happy already, please feel free to read the rest of this with a wry smile ;-)

Our old enemy pessimism is a biased way of thinking. If you are going to consider all the negatives about a situation, you are lying to yourself if you do not consider the possible positives too.

Negativity can become a habit, and one that comes naturally to human beings. But balanced thinking can become a habit too, even if it requires a bit more practice.

QUESTION

How does your thinking weigh up?

Inbox Insight No. 4 – Anger

QUOTES

“He who angers you enslaves you.” Anon

“An eye for an eye will make the whole world blind.” Mohandas Gandhi

INSIGHT

I don't know about you, but the most common response I see people making to things they don't agree with, or even understand, is anger.

A comment, attitude or ongoing situation can cause us to become intensely angry, causing us to create internal scenarios that make us even angrier.

(You know the sort of thing: “If he does that, then I'll do that, then he'll be sorry...”)

Not only is this extremely damaging to your health, it also renders you much less capable of actually doing something about it.

If you ruminate angrily over what you are going to say to someone, this 'mental rehearsal' renders you more likely to become angry in the situation itself, decreasing your choices and flexibility.

And in most situations, anger will damage your chances of a mutually beneficial outcome. As with any intense emotion, you cannot think creatively when angry.

Through inhibition of the higher cortex, anger makes us stupid.

QUESTION

Of course, anger is sometimes an appropriate response - but just how often?

What other options might you have?

Inbox Insight No. 5 – Handling Criticism

QUOTE

“No one beneath you can offend you. No one your equal would.” Jan L. Wells

INSIGHT

When others confront, criticise or insult you, it can be upsetting and worrying.

However, when we understand that this sort of behaviour is more a comment about the person doing it than the person it's aimed at, it can drastically change the way we feel.

Accepting responsibility is not the same as accepting insults!

Even if a person has a point, it doesn't mean they have to be abusive or critical in the way they convey it. In fact, they don't HAVE to convey it at all!

Once, the famous psychiatrist Milton Erickson was with a client who called him clumsy because of the way he walked with his damaged leg.

Erickson said, “Sure I'm clumsy, but you haven't seen how clumsy I am when I walk outside!”

An insult is really only an insult when it is accepted.

QUESTION

The next time someone insults or criticises you, how could you deal with it elegantly?

Inbox Insight No. 6 – Dealing with Doubt

QUOTE

“Our doubts are traitors that make us lose the good we oft might win by fearing to attempt.”

William Shakespeare, 16th Century English playwright

INSIGHT

You know that feeling when you attempt something new, or something that you find a little scary?

You have natural doubts; but how often do you listen to them more than you think about the possible benefits, or the joy of the experience?

Although fear is compelling, having doubts doesn't mean that there is any truth in them.

Doubts don't have a monopoly on truth - you can argue with them, prove them wrong, or even just ignore them altogether!

QUESTION

What are your doubts convincing you of?

How much more would you be capable of if you listened to them less?

Inbox Insight No. 7 – Take Control

QUOTES

“It is not enough to have a good mind. The main thing is to use it well.”
René Descartes, 17th Century mathematician and physiologist

“The happiest person is the person who thinks the most interesting thoughts.”
Timothy Dwight, 18th Century poet and writer

“He who can see both sides of an argument is missing something.”
Idries Shah, 20th Century Sufi

INSIGHT

How easy is it to wallow in the misery of a situation? How attractive to just believe the worst and so not bother? How natural to look on the dark side of life?

It is all too easy to see the worst in things, waiting for things to 'get better' before getting active and interacting with life.

Catch 22! As we know, it is usually the interaction and the activity that creates the pleasure!

It is the effort of thinking all the way round a situation that yields the rewards. The stubbornness to not just accept the first interpretation your mind feeds you.

Taking control of your own thoughts can be difficult at first. It can feel like it will always be hard.

And then, with a little perseverance, you get the first reward. It gets a little easier. And so the snowball begins to roll down the hill.

One interpretation, one point of view, a single way of looking at things is one kind of choice.

No Choice At All!

Practice a little flexible thinking and see the rewards come rolling in!

The next time you get angry, upset or depressed about something, remember that a 'negative' emotion needs a single interpretation to exist.

QUESTION

What other points of view are there for situations that typically make you emotional?

Inbox Insight No. 8 – New Perspectives

QUOTE

“The world is full of magical things patiently waiting for our wits to grow sharper.”

Bertrand Russell, 20th Century mathematician and Nobel Prize winner

INSIGHT

You may have noticed that when you are on holiday you notice things that you have never seen before; like the colour of peoples' clothes, different plants and flowers, heady scents and novel flavours.

This may be because you are in a new environment, or may simply be because you are calm.

Stress causes the brain to focus attention very sharply, which is of course useful, but in only one way, and at specific times.

How much more could you see and experience if you were calmer more of the time? Who do you know that sees things radically differently to you?

Rather than trying to convince them of your point of view, what can you learn from them about the way they see the World?

And who knows what there is to see out there?

QUESTION

Who you know about whom you frequently think “They've got that wrong”, or “How can they think that?” Are they wrong, or just really different?

What might you be able to learn from them?

Inbox Insight No. 9 – Overcome Limitations

QUOTE

“Argue for your limitations, and sure enough, they're yours.”

Richard Bach, 20th Century author

INSIGHT

Have you ever had that experience, when you tell someone about a problem, they try and help you with it, and before you know it, you're arguing for why it's much worse than they say?

It seems to be something that happens regularly to many of us.

But what happens when your need to feel right about something actually damages your ability to perform well?

When you argue for something, you cannot help but become more attached to that idea, and 'believe' more in what you are arguing for.

Be careful that you're not arguing yourself into a corner!

QUESTION

Which of your own perceived limitations do you argue for, or believe in?

Inbox Insight No. 10 – Clear Thinking

QUOTE

“There are two ways to slide easily through life: to believe everything or to doubt everything; both ways save us from thinking.”

Theodore Rubin, psychiatrist and author

INSIGHT

Do you know someone who specialises in pointing out all the problems with things other people do or say?

Of course it is useful to be able to spot the weak point in something, but what about letting people make their own mistakes?

And how much more creative and intelligent is it to apply a little thought (it doesn't take much) and so extract the possibilities from an idea or situation?

“Every cloud has a silver lining” and “It's an ill wind that blows no-one any good” are clichés, and as with so many clichés, contain a great deal of wisdom.

It's great to be able to spot what's wrong with something - but not if that's all you can do.

QUESTION

Who do you know who does this? How do you protect yourself from their pessimism?

Inbox Insight No. 11 – Personal Development

QUOTES

“A discovery is said to be an accident meeting a prepared mind.”

Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, winner of the 1937 Nobel Prize for medicine

“If you are content with yourself, you'll stop taking those little steps forward and begin taking big steps backward.”

Greg Maddux, American baseball pitcher

INSIGHT

How often do we wait until things have got really bad before we do something about them?

But if the first quote is true, then we need to constantly improve and refine ourselves, whether there is a problem or not!

Although self-criticism can be painful if we do it all the time, we can note things about ourselves that we would like to change and calmly go about changing them.

Then, when the time comes for *your* discovery, perhaps you'll be prepared.

QUESTION

You could try taking one thing about yourself that you'd like to change and ask the question, “How will things be once that has changed?” Then you could think about how to get there.

Or, on the other hand...

Inbox Insight No. 12 – Fear of Failure

QUOTES

“The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task.”

Vince Lombardi, American football coach

“If there is no wind, row.” Anon

INSIGHT

'Fear of failure' is a commonly voiced reason for not attempting things, but what does it really mean?

It assumes that 'success' means to complete something 'well'.

But if we look again at Vince Lombardi's quote above, it redefines success as doing what we can do, as well as we can, in the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

It's possible that trying the same thing a year later, we could do better, or be more successful, but without the initial effort nothing will be achieved and nothing will change.

I find it helps me to know that when starting something, I don't have to finish it. I might find out half way through that it won't work.

However, without the 'starting', I'll never know, and will be left with a feeling of failure.

So failure is simply failing to start something.

You don't try TO succeed. WHEN you try, you succeed.

QUESTION

What are you putting off for fear of not completing it well?

Inbox Insight No. 13 – Flexible Thinking

QUOTE

A mother, annoyed by her son's constant pestering, invented a game for him to play.

She cut up a map of the world and gave him the pieces to put back together again, thinking it would take him hours, if he ever managed it.

Ten minutes later he returned with the completed map. When she asked him how he had done it so quickly, he said, "There is a picture of a woman on the back, and when I put her together, the Wworld came together."

INSIGHT

The same story can have different meanings for different people.

It could mean that adversity is the mother of invention...

That you can confound other peoples' expectations of you...

That all it takes to solve a seemingly impossible problem is to look at it in a different way...

QUESTION

Can you see any other meaning in it? If you can, why not drop us an email?

Inbox Insight No. 14 – Fear and Risk

QUOTE

“Every time you meet a situation, though you think at the moment it is an impossibility and you go through the tortures of the damned, once you have met it and lived through it you find that forever after you are freer than you were before.”

Eleanor Roosevelt, humanitarian

INSIGHT

It seems that when you do something successfully that has scared you, you benefit from that for the rest of your life. Surely sometimes it's worth the risk?

Of course, sometimes the risk lies in refusing to do something.

The trick lies in knowing when you are acting out of fear.

QUESTION

Is there anything you're avoiding doing just because it feels scary when you think about it?

What's the worst that could happen?

AND! - what's the best?

Inbox Insight No. 15 – What Works

QUOTES

“I once listed all the good things I did over the past year, and then turned them into resolution form and backdated them. That was a good feeling.”

Robert Fulghum, 20th Century minister and author

“Don't have a wishbone where your backbone should be” Anon

INSIGHT

The first quote made me laugh out loud.

But I think it says something interesting too. These days, we are bombarded with ideas about planning, organisation and structure.

But have you ever had the feeling that you have to do something now, or it will never get done?

Spontaneity can be a wonderful (and dangerous!) thing and I know that I have done a lot of work I am proud of in the day following the moment I had the idea.

In fact, I typically do things at the last moment - I never miss deadlines, but I do leave it late very often.

This used to really stress me out, and I spent years on and off trying to do things ahead of time.

Then one day I thought “Hold on, this is working!”

Now I just do what Robert Fulghum says and congratulate myself for my organisation and follow-through after I've done something! ;-)

QUESTION

I know 'Just do it' is a cliché – but why shouldn't you?

Inbox Insight No. 16 – Real Intelligence

QUOTE

“I can stand brute force, but brute reason is quite unbearable. There is something unfair about its use. It is hitting below the intellect.”

Oscar Wilde, Irish poet, playwright and author.

INSIGHT

Don't you just love those people who delight in showing you you're wrong whilst making you think that they're helping you?

With all the focus on IQ's and 'advanced' education, other forms of intelligence are sometimes ignored.

'Emotional Intelligence' has been shown to be more important than IQ points for success in the workplace.

QUESTION

People who can voice their ideas are often seen as the 'most intelligent'. Do you think this is necessarily true?

Inbox Insight No. 17 – Imagination

QUOTES

“Present fears are less than horrible imaginings”

William Shakespeare, 16th Century English playwright

“Cowardice, as distinct from panic, is nearly always a lack of ability to suspend the functioning of the imagination.”

Ernest Hemingway, 20th Century American writer

INSIGHT

I'm sure you know how easy it is to mistakenly think that imagination is reality.

You imagine something you've got to do next week, and your heart rate goes up!

You've responded to something you made up as if it were real. Anything imagined cannot be 'real', by definition!

The imagination is a powerful thing, and wonderful when used constructively.

QUESTION

What can you imagine happening that would make you feel fantastic, instead of scared?

Can you become more aware of the workings of your imagination, and so use it more to your advantage?

Inbox Insight No. 18 – Friendship

QUOTES

“A crowd is not company, and faces are but a gallery of pictures, and talk just a tinkling cymbal where there is not love.”

Francis Bacon, 17th Century English Lord Chancellor, philosopher and author

“The only way to have a friend is to be one.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 19th Century American author and poet

INSIGHT

Have you noticed that it's possible to be surrounded by people yet still feel lonely?

Emerson's quote above suggests that we should focus on others in social situations instead of worrying about ourselves.

Strangely, this seems to be the way to get the most out of friendships, (and perhaps life?)

And of course 'friendship' is not usually just an accident. It comes out of communication and understanding; from peoples' effort and sacrifice; from the ability to tolerate uncertainty when meeting someone for the first time.

QUESTION

Are you making the most of your relationships? Why do you think this is?

Which 'friendships' do you think you could nurture more, and which could you happily do without?

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