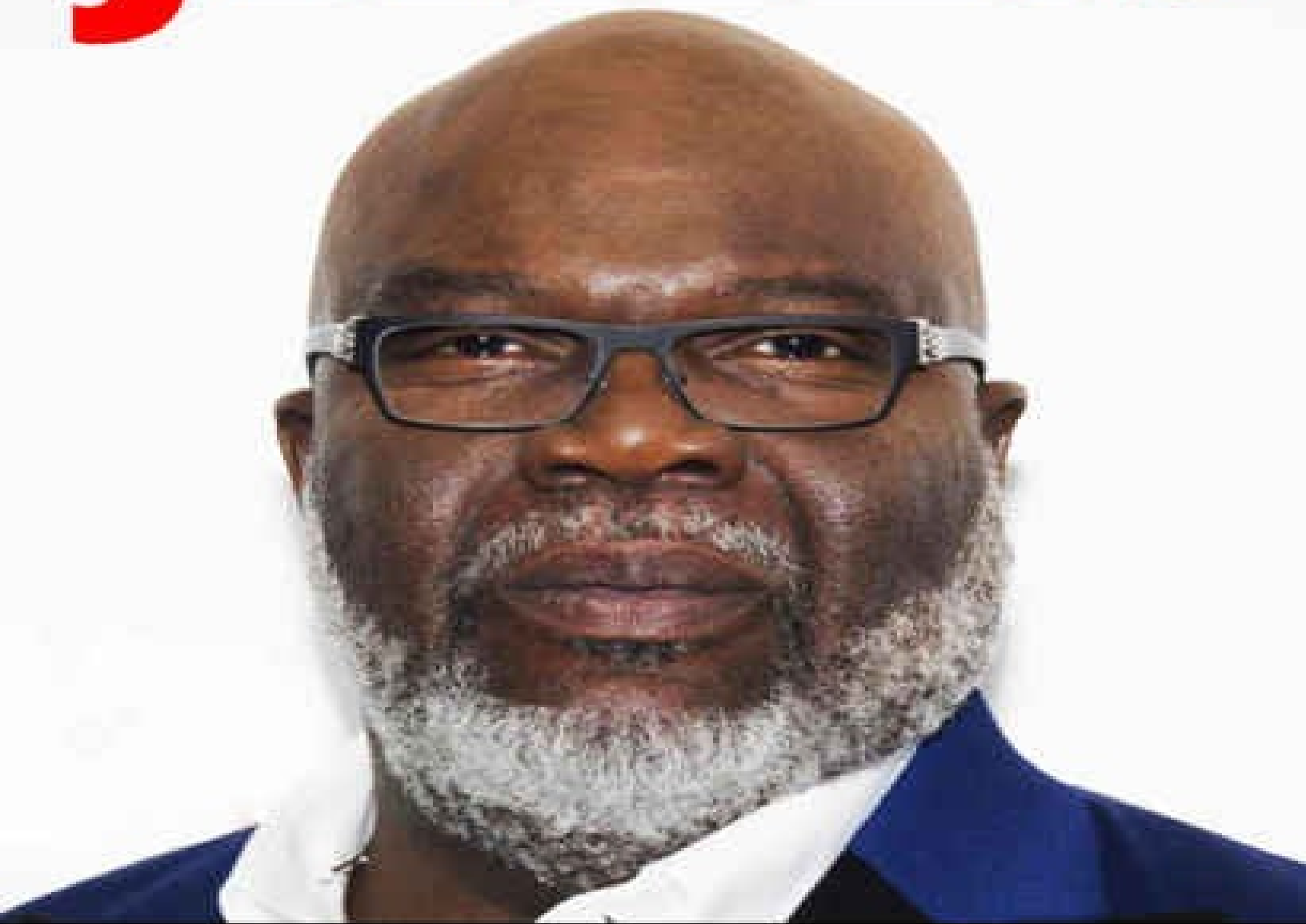


T.D. JAKES



88

GREATEST LIFE LESSONS, INSPIRATION
AND BEST QUOTES BY T.D. JAKES

ADAM GREEN

T.D. Jakes:
88 Greatest Life Lessons, Inspiration
And Best Quotes By T.D. Jakes

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Introduction

Thomas Dexter Jakes (T.D. Jakes, Sr) is a bishop of a non-denominational megachurch. He has received a number of awards and honors such as 13 doctorates and degrees, Dove and Grammy nominations for his Gospel album, and was featured in Time magazine, which called him a newer version of Billy Graham.

He has also written a number of works including “Let it Go: Forgive So You Can Be Forgiven” and “Life Overflowing: Six Pillars for Abundant Living.”

He has also played himself and other reverend characters in films including “Woman Thou Art Loosed” and “Munya”. In 2014, he began to produce movies as well.

His works, words, and life have inspired a number of people since he took a job at a Union Carbide and preaching. His radio ministry that ran in the 80’s influenced many who heard his voice.

In 1990, he began to focus his efforts to helping the needs of the women who attend his church. Primarily the women who had been abused, neglected, or abandoned in their lives.

He even started a special Sunday class for them, which he called, “Woman, Thou Art Loosed.” In this class, he encouraged them to focus their past pain into learning experiences in order to build a foundation for personal and spiritual growth.

I have collected a number of his quotes in order to help inspire and focus your life as well.

Chapter 1 – Owning Your Talents

1. *“ In order to have more, you have to master what you have. You can't be fruitful until you're seedful. ” - T. E. Jakes*

Mastering your own talents is the key to success. However, in order to really master your talent, you need to figure out what those talents are. We are all good at something.

The most successful people (successful in their personal and/or professional lives) know what their talents are and they build on it. Do you know what your true talent is?

Finding Your True Talent

2. Revisit Your Youth

You might have heard about this tactic in the past. If you did, there was a good reason: it works. Think about what you used to do as a child – before you were influenced by your fears. As we grow up, we learn fear.

We learn fears because of our innate nature and need to survive. If we find that something might threaten that survival or our possibilities of success, we learn to be fearful of those things.

When we are children, most of us are fearless. If you can go back far enough, you can go back to before your parents had expectations for you to follow a certain path; instead, they just wanted you to be happy and healthy.

What kinds of things did you enjoy back in those times? What did you do to make yourself happy? What did you think was fun? What did you enjoy learning about?

3. Ask Your Friends And Family About You

The people that are closest to you know what makes you tick. Sometimes they know you a little better than you know yourself... about certain things, at least. They can see things about you that you can't see yourself because you are too close.

Ask them about what they see in you. What observations have they made? Ask them questions like, "What do you find unique about me? What do I do well? What skills stick out about me?"

Don't just limit these questions to your mom or your best friend either. Ask your colleagues and associates.

They see you in a different environment. While they may not be able to land on your specific gift, their observations can point you in the right direction.

4. Take Up Journaling

When you write down the things that go through your mind every night (or morning), you will begin to see patterns.

Look at those patterns to see what common interests you may have through your every day interactions. You will be able to find what types of purposes, places, and people you are drawn to in your life.

5. Take Some Tests

You know those annoying career and placement tests that your counselors used to make you take when you were in high school? Those answers were important because those tests knew what kind of questions to ask you.

They weren't often blatant questions like, "Do you want to make millions of dollars in the business field?" No, those questions would often ask you about your interests, personality traits, and skills.

There are a number of tests that are similar to those quizzes and assessments, that you can find online. To name a few:

- DISC

- Myers-Briggs
- CDR
- Strengths Finder

These results can offer some valuable insight into what makes you happy and what skills or path you should follow in your life.

6. Make Sure You Are Scheduling In Some Alone Time

This is something that most people take advantage of. Some people just don't like to be alone. Others find that they are "too busy" to do things on their own. They have kids to take care of and projects to do.

However, creating some weekly (at the minimum) alone time will really give you some awareness of the things that you like to do.

I suggest going as far as taking a solo vacation for the weekend or a week – if you can swing it.

Don't let any distractions disturb you. Listen to yourself and focus on your relationship with yourself and with your religious beliefs. Giving into your spiritual side will heighten your awareness of your values and that will also help you find out where your talents lie.

Chapter 2 – Bettering Yourself Is The Next Step

7. *“Destiny has steps. You can't move to the next level until you master the level that you're on.”- T. E. Jakes*

Your destiny lies in your future. T.D. Jakes and other holy men believe that God has a plan for you.

However, in order to follow that plan, you need to master the step that you are currently on. What counts as “levels” and “steps”? These levels will differ depending on who you are, what’s going on in your life, and what situations you are put in.

Sometimes it is that you need to master the skills that you have in order to utilize them in this part of your life – or the “level” that you are on.

How Do You Master Your Skills?

8. Watch Your Mentors

Most of us are combination learners. Some learn better by listening and watching. Being able to watch your mentors in action, will help you master those skills.

Make sure that you ask a lot of questions and that you are in constant exposure to tools that will allow you to further that skill.

For example, if this level or step in your life involves going to a foreign country on business or to help the poor, it would behoove you to learn the language. You can do that by constantly being immersed in the language.

Pick someone who is fluent in that language to help you learn more about the tenses, building blocks, and the sentence structure.

9. Kinesthetic Learners

Remember how I talked about combination learners? Most of us are combination kinesthetic and visual. We like to see things done, then we try to do them ourselves.

You can't be afraid to fail either. You master something with a combination of failure and success. The key is to learn from your mistakes so that you can do it in a quicker, more effective, and simpler way.

10. Deconstruct It And Turn It Into Small Goals

When you learn a new skill, it can be overwhelming. Normally, a skill (like learning a new language, learning how to play the piano, or communicating better) is a grouping of a bunch of smaller skills that are put together.

Let's say that you want to learn a new sport like football. It isn't just one skill. It is a blend of throwing, catching, running, and being observant (to name a few).

11. Dedicate The Time

Commit to 20 hours of practice at first. The actual act of sitting still (so to speak) so that you can practice will be difficult at first but once you get that habit down, you will be able to easily schedule in more time for practice – or at least consistent time.

12. Make Some Goals

The destiny that T.D. Jakes speaks of isn't necessarily going to be spelled out for you. In fact, we don't always know what is in our destiny – God's plan – until much later in our lives. Until then, it is important to set small goals so that you can master these skills and move up to the next level of your big life plan.

Of course, the first step is to define what you mean by "master a skill". How will you know when you have mastered a skill? Do you need to master this certain skill or just get to a certain point of proficiency?

Remember that everyone's idea of mastery will be different. Let's take another example: baking. I would like to learn how to make the perfect layer cake from

scratch.

If I can master this particular project to my own specific standards, I will consider this skill mastered.

However, someone else who wants to master baking might think that a perfect soufflé. And someone else might think that being able to create their own recipe for a blueberry lemon cupcake (from scratch) as mastery.

You want to make sure that these goals that you set for yourself are reasonable though.

I wouldn't expect to pick up a muffin tin for the first time today and bake the perfect, home-made blueberry lemon cupcakes tomorrow. Set small goals that will add up to that big goal that you have for yourself in the future.

Chapter 3 – Giving Something To The Future

13. “Together we can build a solid foundation for the next generation! Bridging Generations Empowering Youth!”- T. E. Jakes

14. Giving your time, expertise, and sometimes your money or other material objects to the future will have lasting effects. Our kids will eventually be living in a world without us. Why not try to give them a solid foundation so that they can live in a strong, good world? Teach them how to be good people and make the world a better place one step at a time.

You may be thinking, “I won’t be able to make a difference. I am just one person.” However, think of it this way: if you can teach your child to be a great person, your child may end up making a big difference when he or she grows up.

Your child could be the next president, teacher, or doctor. All of these people make a difference.

If you don’t have children, you can take the time to donate a little bit of yourself to a good cause.

You can donate your time, your money, or your talents to an organization that works towards a belief or a goal that you feel passionate about: literacy, clean earth, building homes for the homeless, feeding the hungry, spending time with animals that need help, *etc.* There are an endless amount of causes that you can choose from.

Need another reason to help out? Check out some of these great reasons:

15. “ What ’ s In It ForMe? ”

Believe it or not, it can be okay to ask yourself this question. Now here are the

parameters for that question. Volunteering can help you build on certain skills.

You can also make friends and meet new connections, open up some doors for your personal and professional life, and be able to spend time with things that you enjoy.

Volunteering for a cause does not mean that you have to suffer. In fact, it should be quite the opposite. You should be able to enjoy yourself while you volunteer. You just need to find out what you enjoy first, then find causes and organizations that are associated with those things.

16. Volunteers Live Healthier and Longer Lives

It's a fact. Studies have shown that people who volunteer are physically able to function longer and volunteering has a positive effect on their psychological well-being.

It isn't just a moment of time where these people volunteer either. The people in the studies volunteer for organizations and causes their whole lives – not non-stop, mind you.

17. You Can Establish Strong Relationships

Like I mentioned earlier, volunteering can lead to new relationships and new connections for both your personal and professional lives (though, I'll talk a little bit more about the latter soon).

When you work alongside people who believe in the same cause as you and who feel just as passionate about those causes as you do, you will inevitably find that you can build some strong relationships this way.

Just the same, you can also strengthen some of your relationships by volunteering together.

If you and your family aren't really spending time together or if you are finding that you're drifting apart in your romantic relationship, finding a cause that you both feel passionate about can help to rebuild that bridge.

Not only that, if you volunteer with your child, you can instill some great and powerful values within your child.

18. Your Career Can Flourish Because Of Your Volunteer Experiences

Your professional career could blossom because of your volunteer experiences. It is very possible to meet possible connections that could further your current position or lead you in a different (more positive) direction. If you would prefer the latter, think of this technique...

What values do you want to showcase in a possible profession? What type of profession would you like to pursue? What values are associated with that profession?

For example, if you would like to pursue a career as a writer, you can volunteer for a literacy foundation or council, donate time to the library, help a local writers association or group with a fundraising project, *etc.*

Once you start the volunteer project, work hard and build genuine relationships and connections.

You can also learn valuable skills through this volunteer experience. As far as writing and literacy are concerned, an example would be by reading to kids or helping them learn to read. As you do that, you will be exposed to a plethora of different types of literature.

Chapter 4 – The Importance of Competition

19. “ There is a glory, a power, wisdom, strength, deliverance that comes out of the pressure! ” - T. E. Jakes

When some people feel pressure in their lives, they just break down. They focus on how much they hate the pressure and they close up – almost as if they were curling up into a ball and rolling themselves into a closet until the pressure dies down.

While that may be an effective survival technique, it doesn't so much to develop yourself as a person.

We learn a lot about ourselves when we consider what we are like when we are under pressure.

For example, let's talk about competition – that is a specific type of pressure that can be exhibited in both your personal and your professional life. How you handle competition says a lot about who you are.

So ask yourself, what do you think of competition? Do you think there is such a thing as friendly competition? Do you believe that competition makes you better or worse?

20. Competition Breeds Innovative Thinking

If your company is in competition with other companies, you will both be pushing for more evolved and innovative products in order to win over your possible customers.

21. Competition Makes You Focus On Other People

When you work for a company that has competing businesses, you need to be able to focus on other people – mainly your customers. You need to know what they want in order to make a product or service that they will need and want.

22. Competition Breeds Quality Service

If you didn't have any competition, you might not treat your customers as well as you should.

Since there is always the possibility that they may leave to shop or patron your competitors' storefront or website, you need to make sure that they are satisfied with your work.

That doesn't just mean your products either. That also means that you need to give them quality service, as in customer service.

23. Competition Provides You With Motivation

You will be more motivated to distinguish your company from other companies in your field. You will want to become more recognized for setting high standards and providing the public with better products than your competition.

It also serves as a way to see what's out on the market without having to spend more money on advertising and marketing.

The information that you can get from analyzing your competitors can show you and your company where you should advertise, what works well with your product, and what types of price ranges your target market prefers to spend.

Chapter 5 – The Importance of Being Present

24. “One of the hardest things to do is to remain present! It takes courage to be present!”- T. E. Jakes

25. What does it mean to be present?

PRES•ENCE

1. THE HERE AND NOW (N).
2. TO BE IN REAL TIME (V).

If you are present, you aren't lingering on past events and you're not fretting over the future – you are living in the NOW. So how do you know if you are living in the now?

You know that you are being present when you are:

- Focused on what is happening right now,
- Paying attention to the small things
- Not worrying about the past and the future
- Showing signs of gratitude

There are many different ways that you can be present. Here are a few of my favorites:

26. Start taking more walks.

Walking lets you be by yourself. Don't take your phone with you. Don't even take your MP3 player. Just enjoy the environment. Listen to the birds in the sky. Feel the cool breeze against your cheek. Observe the colors of the season. It's calming, relaxing, healthy, and will bring you back to reality.

27. Turn everything into a mindful moment.

Anything can be a mindful moment: vacuuming the living room, working on a project, cooking dinner, playing catch with your son, *etc.* Just take a moment at the beginning of the task to really stop and heighten your senses. If you feel yourself being overwhelmed with the task, do it again.

28. Delight your inner muse.

Be creative. Create something. Do something. Go out and paint. Make something with your bare hands. Write something down: a poem, a story, even a journal entry. If you're not a "creative" then think of a hobby that you like to do and go do that for an hour. You can even just sit back in a moment of reflection.

29. Stop multitasking.

We're "on" all the time. We never turn ourselves off. But just like our computers, if we don't turn ourselves off every now and then, we'll burn out.

You know that feeling that you get when you have to send your laptop or desktop to the PC guys for repair. That "don't hurt my baby" feeling? That's what your loved ones will be going through when you burn out and end up in the hospital for exhaustion.

I'm not saying that you should never multitask and that multitasking will send you to the hospital.

But you should keep it to a minimum when you can. Enjoy the task that you're on. Revel in that moment. Have you just created a five course meal for you and your family?

Enjoy that. Take in the sights and the smells of dinner. Enjoy the color of the marinara sauce against the white dishes. Sometimes it's the little things that we don't notice.

30. Leave your phone alone.

Seriously, put it in a drawer and just forget about it. I understand that you get “important” phone calls: agents, bosses, clients, family, friends, *etc.* They all need you and missing their call could mean life or death. It doesn’t always have to be that way though.

31. Be grateful.

Sure, giving thanks might sound easy but it isn’t often something that we actively think about. Most of our parents taught us about manners.

However, we get so busy in our everyday lives, that we often toss “gratitude” to the side. Gratitude isn’t just a side effect of being present either. When you are grateful, you also do a lot of good for yourself and for others.

- 32. Gratitude makes us happy in our day to day lives,**
- 33. Gratitude can cure jealousy,**
- 34. Gratitude makes us more attractive, approachable, and trusting,**
- 35. Gratitude improves our mental and physical health,**
- 36. Gratitude can help your relationships (romantic, personal, and professional),**
- 37. Gratitude makes us more resilient on an emotional level,**
- 38. Gratitude has been said to lead to a longer, happier, and healthier life.**
- 39. Gratitude helps to reduce negative feelings and improves and strengthen good ones,**
- 40. Gratitude helps to make us grow as people,**
- 41. Gratitude can help you improve the decision making skills that you normally have issues with**
- 42. Gratitude can lead to a more relaxing day,**
- 43. Gratitude can help to increase your level of energy and help to increase your vigor in life,**
- 44. Gratitude improves our outlook in life and can turn a pessimistic person into an optimistic person,**
- 45. Gratitude can help to reduce our feelings and need for being materialistic.**
- 46. Gratitude can help you become a more spiritual person**
- 47. Gratitude can increase your self esteem,**

Chapter 6 – Don't Let Others Bring You Down

48. "The enemy can't stop you from being blessed, but he will stop you from feeling blessed."- T. E. Jakes

Our history lessons and pop culture icons are filled with examples of people and celebrities overcoming adversity.

Not all of these people are role models but some (like T. D. Jakes) let their good nature fill their voice, values, and ideals. In order to be successful, you need to be able to be confident in yourself.

The nay-sayers can try to make you feel put down but that only happens if you give them that power. Don't allow them that privilege. Let your self confidence and your belief in yourself power you forward.

If you need a little boost in that area of your life (self-confidence and believing in yourself), you're not alone.

A lot of us struggle with low self esteem. Luckily, this is something that we can work on in the comfort of our own homes. Let's go over some ways that you can build yourself up so that others won't be able to tear you down.

49. Make a list of your accomplishments. Everyone has had a lot more accomplishments than they think. Take a moment and write down your accomplishments so far. Make this into a weekly ritual. Sit down every

Monday and think about all of the accomplishments that you had last week.

50. Fill your life with people that support you and make you feel good about your actions. When you fill your life with positive people, you will feel more positive and feel uplifted. Sit back and think about what types of people have proven to be a negative influence in your life and start to distance yourself from them. After a while, take a moment to note the effects of these two actions.

51. Don't be afraid to try a new path. New things are scary. We have learned that throughout the years. However, new things can

also be fun and can lead you to new opportunities which were not open for you before. Don't be afraid of trying something new. You never know where it can lead you.

52. Accept your true self and your faults.

53. Focus on what you do have and not what you don't have.

54. Make yourself and your happiness a priority. Most people don't put themselves first. They put their family and their jobs before their own happiness. For the most part, that comes with the territory of being a parent and a spouse. However, you need to take a moment to consider your happiness as well. Take at least an afternoon to yourself at least once every couple weeks – minimum.

55. Challenge yourself. It feels good, it makes you a better person, and it feels satisfying.

56. Always keep learning and growing as a person. It keeps you sane and knowledgeable.

57. Create expectations for yourself, don't follow others' expectations for you.

58. Utilize affirmations and mantras to power you up! This may sound silly when you actually practice it but no one needs to hear you when you pump yourself up. Choose something that means a lot to you and use it to get yourself going in the morning.

59. If you fail at something, just brush yourself off and ask yourself, "What can I learn from this mistake to ensure that it will not happen again in the future?" We all take missteps. The difference between successful people and others, is what we do about those missteps.

60. Learn to accept compliments. We have all taught ourselves how to be bashful and how to simply brush off compliments like they are nothing special. We think that shows humility and keeps us from being arrogant. However, it does nothing of the sort.

61. Know that you don't have to do things alone. Remember that positive support group? They're there for you. Don't be afraid to reach out to them.

62. Groom and dress for success. The saying goes, "Dress for the position that you want, not the position that you are currently in." That is rooted in reality. When you dress in a way that makes you feel professional, you do more professional things. It changes your mindset. In that same respect, if you dress like a scrub, you

will act like a scrub.

63. Create an image of what you really want to be in your life. Picture how you really want to see yourself in a position of success.

64. Be prepared. Being prepared is one of the key aspects to being confident. When you are prepared for anything that happens, you feel confident to take on challenges.

65. Learn how to speak slowly and actively listen to others.

66. Improve your posture. It is amazing what sitting up straight and standing tall can do for your self-esteem. Just try doing it right now. Sit or stand up straight. How do you feel? Now how do you feel when you slouch?

67. Don't compare yourself to others. That is not a good way to validate yourself. You can have mentors but don't compare yourself to them – emulate the habits that you look up to.

68. Smile more! Smiling will not only change your attitude. It will change your perspective and serves as a natural face lift.

69. Focus on solutions rather than just the problem.

70. Read up on things. When you are well-read and educated, you will feel better when you talk to other people about those topics. In addition to that, the act of reading also works your brain. There are a plethora of positive side effects to reading including (but not limited to):

- 1. It stimulates your mind.**
- 2. It will reduce your stress level.**
- 3. It will fill you up with knowledge.**
- 4. It will help to expand your vocabulary.**
- 5. It will aid in improving your memory and retention.**
- 6. It will help you develop stronger thinking skills.**
- 7. It will influence your writing in a good way.**
- 8. It can help you feel more tranquil.**
- 9. It is free entertainment (from the library).**

71. Stop trying to make everyone happy by being someone that you are not. We all have different personas (at work, at home, in front of the kids, when you're all alone, etc.). Figure out which ones are truly you.

72. Squash that inner critic. For most of us, that inner critic is what brings us down a peg – not the voices of others. We are our worst critics. Don't bring yourself down.

73. Turn a weakness into a strength.

74. Create goals for yourself. SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely) will ensure that you are always moving forward in your life. Turn your smart goals into a bucket list for future endeavors. Don't be afraid to dream big – that's how we achieve bigger things. You won't be able to achieve bigger things if you keep sticking to the mundane.

75. Don't be afraid to be assertive.

76. Never think that you are less than confident but watch out for arrogance.

77. Exercise more. Treating yourself right is the first step to feeling better about yourself and the decision that you make.

78. Eat healthy. You can't just exercise and expect to suddenly be healthy. Eating right can and will improve both your physical and mental health.

79. Make deliberate decisions instead of going on autopilot. Think about the decisions that need to be made instead of just going through the motions.

80. Get a furry friend. Dogs, cats, and other pets have been scientifically proven to raise your self-esteem and your happiness level. It is amazing what these furry friends can do for you. They can combat depression, fight against the effects of aging, and can raise your self-confidence by giving you unconditional love and by bringing a smile to your face. The added responsibility of taking care of a pet will also make you feel more capable in your abilities.

81. Don't be afraid of being flirty sometimes.

82. Do something that you've been putting off for a long time.

83. Embrace your quirky side. We all have one, though they may come in different forms.

84. Look for useful ways of being in the moment and engaging in what life throws at you, instead of being caught up in nonsense and drama.

85. Go meet new people. They will open up your mind to new things and that is empowering.

86. Next time you want to stay at home and be anti-social, force yourself to go out. Often, when we wallow or have too much down time to think, we will spiral into self-doubt.

87. Get up and get moving. I don't necessarily meant "to the

gym” either. Go out and have fun. Binge watching Netflix might sound fun but it won’t help you better yourself. Most things that require you to get off the couch will, however.

Conclusion

88. “ When people walk away from you, let them walk. Your destiny is never tied to anybody that left. ” – T.D. Jakes

T.D. Jakes (and his wife, Serita A. Jakes) are both influential leaders in their circles of influence. He is charismatic, provocative, and a visionary.

His words serve to empower those who listen to him and leads them down a path of both righteousness and inspiration. Let his words and lessons move you to better your professional and personal life.