

Some years ago, in an interview, Pope Francis gave some “tips for bringing greater joy to one’s life”.

Ron Rolheiser, OMI

SECRETS TO HAPPINESS

The Pope’s commentary on each point was rather lengthy, and I will risk synthesizing his central point in my own words.

1. Proceed calmly.

Move with kindness, humility, and calm. These are the antithesis of anxiety and distress. Calm never causes high blood pressure. We need to make conscious efforts to never let the moment cause panic and excessive hurry. Rather be late than stressed.

2. Respect and take care of nature.

The air we breathe out is the air we will re-inhale. This is true spiritually, psychologically, and ecologically. We can’t be whole and happy when Mother Earth is being stripped of her wholeness. Christ came to save the world, not just the people in the world. Our salvation, like our happiness, is tied to the way we treat the earth. It is immoral to slap another person in the face and so it is immoral too to throw our garbage into the face of Mother Earth.

3. Stop being negative.

Needing to talk badly about others indicates low self-esteem. Negative thoughts feed unhappiness and a bad self-image. Positive thoughts feed happiness and healthy self-esteem.

4. Respect others’ beliefs.

What we cherish and put our faith into grows “by attraction, not by proselytizing.” Beauty is the one thing that no one can argue with. Cherish your values, but always act towards others with graciousness, charity, and respect.

5. Work for peace.

Peace is more than the absence of war and working for peace means more than not causing disharmony. Peace, like war, must be waged actively by working for justice, equality, and an ever wider inclusivity in terms of what makes up our family. Waging peace is the perennial struggle to stretch hearts, our own and others, to accept that in God’s house there are many rooms and that all faiths, not least our own, are meant to be a house of prayer for all peoples.

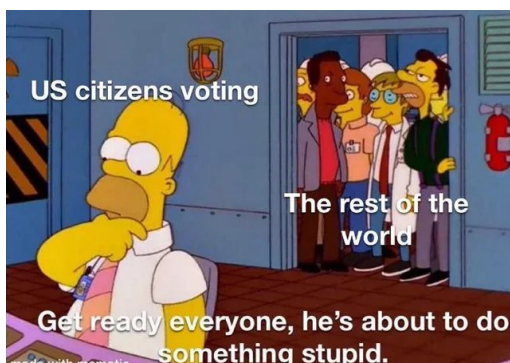
Birthdays: Leonie Gallagher 90, Frank Clarke 83 and Charmaine Bancroft 80



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