

Youth Can Be Eternal

Youth is not a time of life; it is rather a state of mind. It is not a matter of ripe cheeks, red lips, and supple knees. It is a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, vigor of the emotion, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over love of ease. This often exists in a man of 50 more than in a boy of 18.

Nobody grows old by merely living a number of years. People grow old by deserting their ideals. Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear and despair these are the long, long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust.

Whether 80 or 18, there is in the heart of the truly young the love of wonder, the sweet amazement at the stars and the star-like things and thoughts the undaunted challenge of events, the unfailing appetite for the future, and the joy and game of life.

You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubts; you are as young as your self-confidence, as old as your despair. So long as your heart receives messages of beauty, cheer, courage, grandeur and power from the earth, from man and from the Infinite, even so long are you young.

When the wires are all down and all the central places of your heart is covered with snows of pessimism and the ice of cynicism, then you are grown old indeed and may God have mercy on your soul.

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