

Guiding Lights

A treasury of moral and
inspirational quotes for life



Dr. Venkata Rao Potluru

Introduction

Life often asks us to make choices — in study, in work, in relationships, in society. In these choices, it is not only knowledge or skill that guides us, but also values. Honesty, kindness, patience, responsibility, and compassion are the unseen lights that give direction when the path is unclear.

This book, *Guiding Lights*, is not a collection of rules, but a companion for reflection. It brings together **short moral quotes, timeless reminders, and reflective passages** — words that may serve as sparks of awareness in daily living.

Some sections offer simple guiding lines, while others open into deeper reflections on love, freedom, awareness, and the timeless. Together they form a tapestry of values for students, professionals, families, and seekers of truth.

May these guiding lights serve as companions in moments of doubt, courage in times of challenge, and reminders that true greatness lies not in wealth or position, but in character, clarity, and compassion.

Dr. Venkata Rao Potluru
Consultant Surgeon and Author
Operating Under Fire & The Timeless Awareness

Contents

Introduction.....	2
Beyond Time.....	5
The Illusion of Self.....	8
The Inner Victory	11
Choiceless Awareness.....	12
Living in the Present.....	16
The Innermost Nature of Life.....	18
Living and Flowering in Freedom.....	21
The Way Inward, Not the Way of Escape.....	23
Beyond Addiction: Freedom Without Escape	25
Compassion as Medicine	29
Comparison: A Psychological and Biological Poison....	33
Guiding Sparks for the Young	37
Echoes of Wisdom	42
Timeless Wisdom	45
Echoes from The Timeless Awareness.....	47
Guiding lights on Relationship	50
Guiding Lights After Marriage	53

Guiding Lights for Students	54
Guiding Lights: A Surgeon’s Lesson.....	56
Guiding Lights for Workers	58
Guiding Lights for Employees	59
Guiding Lights for Teachers	61
Guiding Lights for Journalists	62
Guiding Lights for Business people.....	63
Guiding Lights for Doctors	64
Guiding Lights for Writers	65
Guiding Lights for Filmmakers.....	66
Scroll Wisely, Live Fully.....	67
Closing Note.....	69

Beyond Time

The mind is the product of time. It is shaped by yesterday — by memories, experiences, pleasures, and wounds. This whole weight of the past flows into the present, interprets every challenge according to its conditioning, and then projects itself into tomorrow. This is what we call the movement of time: I was, I am, I shall be.

So long as the mind lives in this pattern, it is never free. The past, whether ten years or ten thousand years old, still acts as the background. It dictates how you respond, how you think, how you feel. And therefore the future is nothing but a continuation of the past, slightly modified. What is called “progress” is often only this movement in circles within the field of time.

See what this means: if your mind is always caught in the movement of memory — the known — then life becomes a repetition, a small circle. In that circle there is no freshness, no newness, no true creation. There may be invention, there may be technological growth, but inwardly, in the heart, it is still the past repeating itself.

Love cannot exist in this circle of time. Love is not memory, it is not born of yesterday’s pleasure or tomorrow’s desire. Love is ever new, flowering in the present, without roots in the past. Freedom too is not found in the continuity of time. Freedom is the ending of time, inwardly — the ending of the self that says, “I was, I am, I shall be.”

To see this directly is to step out of the field of time. It is not an escape, not a denial of the clock, but a discovery that inwardly there is a dimension untouched by memory. In that

dimension there is silence, beauty, and a creation not born of thought.

I am the past,
yesterday and ten thousand yesterdays,
flowing into the present,
shaping tomorrow.

This stream we call time —
“I was, I am, I shall be.”
An endless circle,
the past painting the future,
the future echoing the past.

In this circle
there is progress of machines,
but not of the heart.
There is memory,
but no love.
There is continuity,
but no freedom.

Love is not born of yesterday,
nor of tomorrow’s desire.
It flowers only now,
rootless, timeless,
like a breeze without beginning.

To step out of time
is to end the self that clings to becoming.
In that ending is vastness,
silence,
and beauty —
a creation untouched by thought.

“Where time ends, love begins.”

“Freedom is the silence beyond memory.”

“The timeless is the flowering of the present.”

The Illusion of Self

The self is nothing but memory. It is made of yesterday—experiences, hurts, pleasures, knowledge—and projects itself into tomorrow as hope or fear. This movement of the past through the present to the future we call “I.”

But is there truly an “I” apart from thought? When we observe directly, without analysis, we see that the self is only an image, constantly remade. It is not a living reality, but a shadow. And as long as we live within that shadow, there is division, struggle, and sorrow.

The ending of the self is not achieved by effort or method, for effort itself strengthens the one who strives. The self ends only when there is pure attention—when the mind is utterly still, not seeking, not becoming. In that stillness, the illusion of “I” dissolves. What remains is not emptiness, but life in its wholeness—sacred, vast, and beyond measure.

I call this bundle of memories “I,”
a shadow stitched from yesterday’s threads.
It wears masks of success and failure,
of name, family, nation, belief.

But look closely—
is there truly a center?
Or only fragments of thought
claiming permanence in time?

The self is a mirage in the desert of becoming,
a thirst that multiplies with each drop tasted.

It says: I must be, I must grow, I must continue—
yet what it clings to is already past.

When the mind is quiet,
not reaching, not grasping,
this “I” dissolves like mist at sunrise.
And in that dissolution—
not emptiness,
but vastness.

Not the self,
but life itself,
whole, sacred, immeasurable,
flowering beyond the prison of “me.”

The self arises
like a wave upon the sea—
a pattern of memory,
of name and form,
echoing yesterday’s whispers
into the noise of today.

Thought says: I am.
But it is only a sound,
a shadow cast by the past
pretending to be the light.

It weaves its web—
of fears, of hopes, of identity—
and then gets caught in it.
The thinker and the thought,
the observer and the observed,
are not two.

There is no center—
only the illusion of one
created by thought's movement
and its longing for continuity.

But awareness,
choiceless, clear,
is a flame untouched
by the smoke of becoming.

In that flame,
the self dissolves
like mist at dawn.

And what remains?
Not a thing to be grasped,
not an answer to be named—
but the quiet immensity of now,
where life simply is.
