**Doing Nothing**

**Never is one more active than when he does nothing. (Cato)**

**There is one piece of advice, in a life of study, which I think no one will object to; and that is, every now and then to be completely idle – to do nothing at all. *(Sydney Smith)***

**Some people would do anything to be able to do nothing. *(Frank Tyger, in Graham, Texas, Rotary “Scandal Sheet”)***

**By practicing the art of doing nothing you will learn the most potent way of acting. You may recover the revolutionary silence that is the source of creative action. (Sam Keen, in Reader’s Digest)**

**The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.*(Edmund Burke)***

**Between the great things that we cannot do and the small things we will not do, the danger is that we shall do nothing. *(Adolph Monod)***

**Garfield says while observing the panting dog: “Dogs. Dogs can look busy even when they’re doing nothing.” *(Jim Davis, in Garfield comic strip)***

**First man: “What are you doing?” Second man: “What’s it look like I’m doing?” First man: “It looks like you’re just sitting on your rear and not doing anything!” Second man: “Is it that obvious?” *(Jerry Bittle in Geech comic strip)***

**Sometimes we jump at things too quickly, too impatiently. The study of the spiritual approach to life teaches that the first action to take is to take no action. James Dillet Freeman writes, “I said to the Master, ‘In praying, what do I do first?’” and “The Master said, ‘Before you can do anything, you must do nothing.’” (Charles Roth, in Unity magazine)**

**Our culture puts great emphasis on productivity. We feel we must always be doing something constructive with our time. We see a child swinging on a gate and we say, “Go find something to do.” We fail to realize that he is already doing something -- he’s swinging on a gate. Inevitably, when we grow up, instead of swinging on a gate when we feel like it, we go out and “find something to do.” *(Dr. Alexander Reid Martin)***

**A German university is offering "idleness grants" worth nearly $1,900 to applicants who promise to do nothing. Applications consist of simple questions such as What do you not want to do? For how long? Why is it important not to do it? Answers will be used in an exhibition called "The School of Inconsequentiality: Towards a Better Life," and successful applicants must submit a report on their inactivities. Friedrich von Borries, an architect and design theorist who developed the program, hopes to show that traditional achievements are overrated. "Doing nothing isn't very easy," he said. *(The Week magazine, September 25, 2020)***

**Grandma: “Did you carry that laundry upstairs for me, Nelson?” Nelson: “Uh, huh.” Grandma: “Did you sweep the kitchen floor and empty the trash?” Nelson: “Yeah. I’m going to help Grampa now for awhile.” Grandma: “Help Grampa? What’s he doing?” Nelson: “Nothing.” *(Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)***

**If today’s average American is confronted with an hour of leisure, he is likely to palpitate with panic. An hour with nothing to do! So he jumps into a dither and into a car, and starts driving off fiercely in pursuit of diversion. I thank heaven I grew up in a small town, in a horse-and-buggy era, when we had, or made, time to sit and think, and often just to sit. *(Don Herold)***

**My son has taken up meditation ... at least it’s better than sitting around doing nothing. *(Max Kauffman, in Catholic Digest)***

**It’s never too late to do nothing at all. *(Allen Ginsberg)***

**Doing nothing is very hard to do . . . you never know when you’re finished. (Leslie Nielsen, actor)**

**There is no pleasure in having nothing to do; the fun is in having lots to do and not doing it. *(Mary Wilson Little, writer)***

**Dr. R. Brasch, a rabbi, said that to know what a man is really like, observe only what he is doing when he has nothing to do. (L. M. Boyd)**

**This state of nothingness is often called “the dark night of the soul.” Every saint has known it and has had the courage to survive it. It is called a “dark night” because suddenly one is “just sitting there,” and something vast and empty opens up. You become vulnerable. When that space opens up, we get scared, so we try to close it down again. . . . Another way we avoid this space is to talk fast, move fast, and stay high -- an experience for which we have an affinity in our culture. I was hooked on being high. (Rev. Carol Ruth Knox, in The Incredible Journey, p. 64)**

**Great music’s as much about the space between the notes as it is about the notes themselves. *(Sting)***

**To do nothing except kill time is not murder, but suicide. *(Dr. Joseph Peck)***

**Most people get more done if they take breaks about every 45 minutes. So say efficiency experts. (L. M. Boyd)**

**To do nothing at all is the most difficult thing in the world, the most difficult and the most intellectual. *(Oscar Wilde)***

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