**LIFE LESSONS FROM NATURE**

**We should all look up more often. Tens of millions of Americans pulled their heads out of their work and their cell phones this week to witness a rare total solar eclipse, which created an eerie midday twilight as it rolled 3,000 miles across the country, spooking the birds and cows and leaving vast crowds of normally crabby humans cooing and exclaiming like children. Even for those of us who had to settle for a partial eclipse, it was thrilling -- a reminder that we are passengers on a rock swinging through the solar system in a celestial dance choreographed by forces beyond our ken and our control. Awe is an uplifting emotion. It is good to feel small, to sense how brief and fragile our lives are in astronomical terms, to see that beyond the mundane lies a great mystery. Like most people, I look up too infrequently. But seeing the sky always changes my mood for the better. Look up: The heavens are full of wonders even when the moon isn't blocking the sun. Every dawn and sunset is an astonishment of gorgeous light and startling, shifting color. All day, clouds tinged with gray, pink, and orange pass overheard like windblown thoughts, scudding across a canvas of depthless blue. At night, countless stars silently smolder in the black infinity, many or most of them (we now know) orbited by their own necklace of swirling planets and moons. Is anyone looking back when you look up? Why is the universe so incomprehensibly vast, with billions of galaxies, each containing billions of stars? Wondering about such things is somehow comforting -- a welcome departure from the news, Twitter, and Instagram. This week, a great darkness fell upon America, and it was easy to understand why eclipses terrified the ancients, who saw them as portents of doom. But then the sun returned, advising us: Light defeats darkness. This, too, shall pass. *(William Falk, in The Week magazine, September 1, 2017)***

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***[**Today, September 13th, 2025, is**](http://www.mondaymunchees.com/) **POSITIVE THINKING DAY**

[**For quotes, stories, funnies, anecdotes, illustrations, trivia, and statistics on this topic, I invite you to scroll down the homepage of the www.mondaymunchees.com website to the Positive Thinking document**](http://www.mondaymunchees.com/) **located in the P-section of documents!**

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**September 13th, 2025 - solar eclipse *(William Falk, in The Week magazine, September 1, 2017)***

**September 6th, 2025 - Keep things simple – very simple: Jellyfish are a group of very primitive and simple animals, without a brain or heart, nor any form of skeleton. Lots have a round or bell-shaped body with a mouth and simple gut, and tentacles armed with stinging cells that hang in the water below. This simple anatomy has helped jellyfish thrive in all the world’s oceans, from the tropics to the poles, and from surface waters to the very deep sea. Some jellyfish have a very powerful sting, and while they are best not touched, they are beautiful, very varied in form, and mesmerizing to watch. *(Richard Harrington, in Life Lessons froml the Ocean, p. 94)***

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