**Potential**

**It is just like a grain of mustard seed,   
which, when it is sown in the earth,   
is the smallest of all the seeds on earth.   
But when it is sown, it springs up   
and becomes greater than all the herbs,   
and puts forth large branches,   
so that the birds can settle under their shadow.   
*(St. Mark 4:31-32)***

Gary Murphy, a 72-year-old retired construction worker from Palm City, Florida, was horrified when he saw his 11-year-old West Highland terrier, Doogie, in an alligator’s mouth. He quickly jumped onto the gator’s back right behind its head. The gator’s jaws popped open, and the dog was able to run to safety. “Everybody’s trying to make a big deal out of it,” said Murphy. “Anybody would have done it.” Doogie is expected to recover, to Murphy’s relief. “He’s my buddy. I can’t make a move without him.” *(The Week magazine, June 3, 2011)*

**In the United States one automobile engine may discharge up to a ton of pollutants into the air annually. *(E. C. McKenzie, in Tantalizing Facts, p. 110)***

**Remarkable how your body turns food into energy. With that efficiency, according to the experts, if you were a car, you’d get 900 miles to the gallon. *(L. M. Boyd)***

Lose 20 percent of your body’s water, and you’re a goner. Yet the medicos say you could lose 80 percent of your intestines, one lung, one kidney, every organ in the pelvic area, your spleen, 75 percent of your liver – and still survive. *(L. M. Boyd)*

**A bolt of lightning can strike the earth with a force as great as 100 million volts. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 181)***

**A car, it’s claimed, adds its own weight in carbon to the air every year. *(L. M. Boyd)***

Let the child of your great potential be born. Happy birthday! The universe is celebrating you. Celebrate yourself! *(Eric Butterworth)*

In the 1950s, a chimpanzee named Congo captured the British public's imagination when he learned to paint on a popular TV show. He eventually produced some 400 works of "abstract" art. Now, more than four decades after Congo passed away, three of his pieces have been sold by the London auction house Bonhams for $26,352. The proud owner is Howard Hong, a California telecommunications consultant. "On a purely artistic level, when I saw the paintings they struck me," he said. "The style looks like an early Kandinsky," Hong added. "It is said that what makes us human is our ability to conceive of abstract concepts. This totally contradicts that theory." *(The Week magazine, July 15, 2005)*

Continuous effort, not strength or intelligence, is the key to unlocking our potential. *(Winston Churchill)*

**A typical cloud is capable of holding about 100 tons of water. *(Catholic Digest)***

**SPEEDY DELIVERY: 27.4 teraflops is the speed of the fastest computer in Europe, which was installed Tuesday by IBM as part of a radio telescope system developed by the Dutch foundation for astronomical research, Astron. How fast is that? Try 27.4 trillion mathematical operations -- per second. *(Bloomberg News, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, April 27, 2005)***

**Industry does at least 500 things with corn that most of us know nothing about. *(L. M. Boyd)***

Our country has added only one new crop this century, soybeans, which were developed by the Chinese a millennium ago. If we could discover just one new crop of comparable value, it would pay the scientific cost ten thousand times over. *(Dr. Arthur William Galston, in Reader’s Digest)*

There's one place where the people with the greatest potential are gathered. And that's the graveyard. *(Viola Davis)*

Do more than exist – live.

Do more than touch – feel.

Do more than look – observe.

Do more than read – absorb.

Do more than hear – listen.

Do more than listen – understand. *(John H. Rhoades)*

**Our modern scientists say that a single drop of water contains enough latent energy to blow up a ten-story building. *(Charles Fillmore, in Atom-Smashing Power of Mind, p. 9)***

**Unless a man undertakes more than he possibly can do, he will never do all that he can. *(Henry Drummond, author)***

If we did all the things we are capable of, we would literally astound ourselves. *(Thomas Edison)*

**While being shown the Mount Wilson Observatory in California, Mrs. Albert Einstein was told that the giant telescope was required for establishing the structure of the universe. Mrs. Einstein was not impressed. "My husband does that on the back of an old envelope," she said. *(Ronald W. Clark, in Einstein: The Life and Times)***

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**The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn. *(Ralph Waldo Emerson)***

**What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered. *(Ralph Waldo Emerson)***

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**One today is worth two tomorrows. *(Benjamin Franklin)***

**A single gallon of spilled gasoline can contaminate up to 750,000 gallons of groundwater. *(Jim Collins, in Old Farmer's Almanac, 1992)***

The human body has reserves that remain a mystery to science. In March 1976, in Los Angeles, a fifteen-year-old, 130-pound boy lifted one end of a 3,400-pound automobile from his injured father. In his moment of terror the boy called upon some inner strength and it was not found wanting. *(Bernie Smith, in The Joy of Trivia, p. 12)*

Remove a kidney, and the other gets bigger. So say the medicos. *(L. M. Boyd)*

**One laser beam could carry all the radio, TV and telephone messages of the world simultaneously – in theory. *(L. M. Boyd)***

To me, the function and duty of a quality human being is the sincere and honest development of one’s potential. *(Bruce Lee)*

There's no heavier burden than a great potential! *(Linus, from the Peanuts comic strip by Charles M. Schulz)*

The pupil who is never required to do what he cannot do never does what he can do. *(John Stuart Mill)*

Mustard seeds come in a little pod which, when opened, reveals thousands of individual seeds. They seem infinitesimally small. If one seed is isolated from the others, an almost impossible task, it appears as a tiny fleck, barely visible on the tip of a finger. Yet the potential for growth in each tiny seed in infinite. *(Mary Manin Morrissey, in Building Your Field of Dreams)*

Even if the stomach, the spleen, 80 percent of the intestine, one kidney, one lung, and virtually every organ from the pelvic and groin area are removed, the human body can still survive. And even if 80 percent of your liver were removed, the remaining part would continue to function. Within a few months, the liver would have reconstituted itself to its original size! *(Joe Edelman & David Samson, in Useless Knowledge, p. 77)*

Surgeons may remove five-sixths of someone’s kidneys, yet the remaining part may have enough nephrons (the functional units of kidneys) to perform adequately. One entire lung and a part of the second can be removed, and the patient has a chance of walking away from the operation. The amazing liver can often do its job with only one quarter of the organ left intact. Nature endowed you with as much as four to ten times more organ function than is necessary in the resting state. *(Betty Kamen, in Let’s Live magazine)*

Every cliché you’ve ever heard about babies is true, it seems to me. They are soft and warm, fascinating, cute and lovable. I never met one that wasn’t, and it’s a good thing too, because if babies weren’t so cute and lovable maybe we wouldn’t so gladly put up with the fact that they’re so demanding and so much trouble. Babies are pure potential. You pick up a little baby and you’re amazed by how light it is, but you feel also that you’re holding the future, the earth and the sky, the sun and the moon, and all of it, everything, is brand new. Babies help us to put the changing world into perspective too. Changing the world has to wait, when it’s time to change the baby. *(Charles Osgood, “CBS Evening News”)*

Boss: “I’m sorry, but you’re over-qualified for the position we’re offering.” Blondie: “Not a problem. I’ve never lived up to my potential.”

*(Dean Young & John Marshall, in Blondie comic strip)*

**A standard 7 1/4-inch pencil can draw a line 35 miles long, write 45,000 words and absorb 17 sharpenings before becoming an unusable two-inch nub. *(Beth Leibson, in Reader's Digest)***

When Brooke Collins of Juneau, Alaska, heard her pet dachshund, Fudge, barking frantically in the backyard, she ran outside to see the dog in the firm grip of a black bear. Without thinking, she ran screaming up to the bear and punched it in the snout. The shocked bruin dropped the dog and eventually ambled off. “It was all so fast. All I could think about was my dog was going to die,” said Collins, 22, a hairdresser. “I know you’re not supposed to do that, but I didn’t want my dog to be killed.” *(The Week magazine, September 16, 2011)*

**Some quasars produce more energy than a hundred large galaxies, totaling as many as 10,000 billion stars. In one second a typical quasar throws out enough energy to supply all the earth’s electrical needs for billions of years. *(Kenneth F. Weaver, in Reader’s Digest)***

**One ragweed plant can release as many as one billion grains of pollen. *(Noel Botham, in The Book of Useless Information, p. 166)***

**If you had to identify, in one word, the reason why the human race has not achieved, and never will achieve, its full potential, that word would be meetings. *(Rocky Mountain News)***

It matters not what someone is born, but what they grow to be. *(J. K. Rowling)*

How fast can humans run? Usain Bolt, the world-record holder in the 100-meter dash, sprints at a blazing 28 mph. But humans are “nowhere close” to their potential top speed, new research says; in theory, the perfect runner could reach 40 mph. Human beings’ top speed was thought to be limited by the maximum amount of force our legs could withstand as they hit the ground, which in elite runners approaches 800-1,000 pounds. Using specially designed treadmills, however, researchers at Wyoming University found that subjects can generate and withstand 30 percent more force, at least while hopping forward on one leg. The study found that the real limitation on running speed is the rate at which muscles in the body can contract and propel the limbs forward. By analyzing the muscle fibers, biomechanics specialists concluded that humans could reach 40 mph. A man running at that speed in the 100-meter would cross the finish line in 6.67 seconds, leaving Bolt 40 yards in his wake. *(The Week magazine, February 12, 2010)*

Linus in “Peanuts” once said, in anguish, that there is no heavier burden than a “great potential.” *(Charles Schulz, United Feature Syndicate)*

**How Sensitive Are You? If your senses are working normally, you can:**

* **Feel on your fingertips or face a pressure that depresses your skin a bare .00004 inch.**
* **See a small candle flame from 30 miles away on a clear, dark night.**
* **Smell one drop of perfume diffused through a three-room apartment.**
* **Taste .04 ounce of table salt dissolved in 530 quarts of water.**
* **Feel the weight of a bee’s wing falling on your cheek from less than half an inch away.**
* **Distinguish among more than 300,000 different color variations.**
* **Gauge the detection of a sound’s origin based on a .00003-second difference in itws arrival from one ear to the other. *(John D. McGervey and Bill Sones, in Buffalo (N.Y.) News Magazine)***

**An Australian man wearing a woolen shirt and a nylon jacket generated so much static electricity that he set a carpet on fire. When Frank Clewer walked into a building in Warrnambool, Australia, his shirt and jacket were rubbing against each other. Suddenly, as he crossed the carpet, there was a loud popping sound, and the carpet burst into flames. After evacuating the building, fire officials confiscated Clewer's jacket. "We tested his clothes with a static electricity field meter and measured a current of 40,000 volts," said fire official Henry Barton. "Which is one step shy of spontaneous combustion." *(The Week magazine, September 30, 2005)***

**Australian researchers grow an entire functioning MAMMARY GLAND from a single stem cell in less than six weeks, an achievement that could lead to novel therapies for breast cancer. *(Discover magazine)***

To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of becoming, is the only end of life. *(Robert Louis Stevenson)*

**One special day in June the sun is higher in the sky than it is at any other time of the year. That day is also the longest day of the year. It is the summer solstice. Maximal potential and maximal growth are happening together. The spring gives way to the full force of summer, but the harvest is still months away. *(Gary Zukav, in Soul to Soul: Communications from the Heart, p. 10)***

**We don't know who we are until we see what we can do. *(Martha Grimes, in Writer's Handbook)***

**It's not what you are, it's what you don't become that hurts. *(Oscar Levant, pianist and TV personality)***

**HOW MUCH WOOD CAN A WOODPECKER PECK? Once upon a time, there was a young redheaded woodpecker who wanted to test its wings to see a little of the world. Away it flew from its nest, flying up over a hill and settling in a different grove. For a while the little woodpecker fluttered around, but the trees were just not to its liking. So off it flew again to a distant land and clung to a towering tree. Here, the little woodpecker gave the tree trunk a few preliminary taps, then settled down to do some serious pecking. Now the woodpecker drew its head way back. And just as it gave a determined whack, a storm broke overhead. Lightning struck the tree. The tree shattered. Miraculously, the little bird was only knocked to the ground. As it smoothed its ruffled feathers, the little woodpecker looked in amazement at the shattered tree. Then the bird drew itself up to its full height. “You don’t know what’s in you,” the little woodpecker proudly chirped, “until you really try!” *(Joseph J. Labaj, S.J., in Jokes Priests Can Tell, Volume 3)***

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