



A Life of Inspiration

1. RELATIONSHIPS of impact and influence for good, including the relationship I have with myself.

- real
- face-to-face, without screens
- safe in the ways of ok to struggle and ok to grow up, too
- desire to trust God, ok taking God risks
- not transactional, not “if I do, I get” (not punitive)
- but transformational: it is a good thing the relationship is “I receive to become”
- I have, and my friends have broad and deep interests.
- relationships are positive, respectful, and life-giving
- I (we) enjoy real life (outdoors, play outside, hiking, building, gardening...)

2. HABITS: “Actions become habits...become character...become destiny. Divine actions become new habits...become my new character...become my new destiny.”

- of my new nature, not my old
- intentionally formed: all parents train our children in habits. We’ve trained them perfectly well in the habits they currently have (slight groan!)
- lay the rails for future relationships and necessary work ethic

(focus on one at a time...)

- the habit of carefulness, instead of the habit of carelessness
- the habit of prompt obedience (not compliance), instead of the habit of delayed obedience
- the habit of respect, instead of the habit of disrespect or the habit of disregard or sarcasm
- the habit of hope, instead of the habit of despair
- the habit of patience, instead of the habit of impatience or the habit of rushing
- the habit of kindness, instead of the habit of meanness or the habit or disregard
- the habit of noticing, instead of the habit of ignoring
- the habit of lingering, instead of the habit of skimming over big ideas
- the habit of risking, instead of the habit of avoiding risks
- the habit of living in a world bigger than I can exist in perfectly
- the habit of leisure, instead of just a habit of entertainment

3. THE POWER OF IDEAS: “A morning spent without encountering an idea is a morning wasted.”—Charlotte Mason

- read books that contain beautiful language and inspirational ideas (of a divine nature)
- read books that are harder than you can completely understand or read by yourself
- risk enjoying real art
- risk enjoying nature deeply
- develop hobbies that allow time for your mind to linger in rich ideas (hunting, fishing, needlework, gardening, knitting, painting, carpentry....)
- share ideas in conversation, as often/more often than facts, data, agendas, gossip...

Excerpt From:
Fahrenheit 451
By Ray Bradbury

"You're a hopeless romantic," said Faber. "It would be funny if it were not serious. It's not books you need, it's some of the things that once were in books. The same things could be in the 'parlor families' today. The same infinite detail and awareness could be projected through the radios and televisions but are not. No, no, it's not books at all you're looking for! Take it where you can find it, in old phonograph records, old motion pictures, and in old friends; look for it in nature and look for it in yourself. Books were only one type of receptacle where we stored a lot of things, we were afraid we might forget. There is nothing magical in them, at all. The magic is only in what books say, how they stitched the patches of the universe together into one garment for us. Of course, you couldn't know this, of course you still can't understand what I mean when I say all this. You are intuitively right, that's what counts. Three things are missing.

"Number one: Do you know why books such as this are so important? Because they have quality. And what does the word mean? To me it means texture. This book has pores. It has features. This book can go under the microscope. You'd find life under the glass, streaming past in infinite profusion. The more pores, the more truthfully recorded details of life per square inch you can get on a sheet of paper, the more 'literary' you are. That's my definition, anyway. Telling detail. Fresh detail. The good writers touch life often. The mediocre ones run a quick hand over her. The bad ones rape her and leave her for the flies.

"So now do you see why books are hated and feared? They show the pores in the face of life. The comfortable people want only wax moon faces, poreless, hairless, expressionless. We are living in a time when flowers are trying to live on flowers, instead of growing on good rain and black loam. Even fireworks, for all their prettiness, come from the chemistry of the earth. Yet somehow we think we can grow, feeding on flowers and fireworks, without completing the cycle back to reality. Do you know the legend of Hercules and Antaeus, the giant wrestler, whose strength was incredible so long as he stood firmly on the earth? But when he was held, rootless, in midair, by Hercules, he perished easily. If there isn't something in that legend for us today, in this city, in our time, then I am completely insane. Well, there we have the first thing I said we needed. Quality, texture of information."

"And the second?" "Leisure."

"Oh, but we've plenty of off hours."

"Off hours, yes. But time to think? If you're not driving a hundred miles an hour, at a clip where you can't think of anything else but the danger, then you're playing some game or sitting in

some room where you can't argue with the four-wall television. Why? The television is 'real.' It is immediate, it has dimension. It tells you what to think and blasts it in. It must be right. It seems so right. It rushes you on so quickly to its own conclusions your mind hasn't time to protest, 'What nonsense!' "

"Only the 'family' is 'people.' "

"I beg pardon?"

"My wife says books aren't 'real.' "

"Thank God for that. You can shut them, say, 'Hold on a moment.' You play God to it. But who has ever torn himself from the claw that encloses you when you drop a seed in a TV parlor? It grows you any shape it wishes! It is an environment as real as the world. It becomes and is the truth. Books can be beaten down with reason. But with all my knowledge and skepticism, I have never been able to argue with a one-hundred-piece symphony orchestra, full color, three dimensions, and being in and part of those incredible parlors. As you see, my parlor is nothing but four plaster walls. And here." He held out two small rubber plugs. "For my ears when I ride the subway jets."

"Denham's Dentifrice; they toil not, neither do they spin," said Montag, eyes shut. "Where do we go from here? Would books help us?"

"Only if the third necessary thing could be given us. Number one, as I said, quality of information. Number two: leisure to digest it. And number three: the right to carry out actions based on what we learn from the interaction of the first two. And I hardly think a very old man and a fireman turned sour could do much this late in the game. "

"I can get books." "You're running a risk."

"That's the good part of dying; when you've nothing to lose, you run any risk you want."