

“Do It Anyway.”

The verses below reportedly were written on the wall of Mother Teresa's home for children in Calcutta, and are widely attributed to her.

Some sources say that the words below were written on the wall in Mother Teresa's own room. In any case, their association with Mother Teresa and the *Missionaries of Charity* has made them popular worldwide, expressing as they do, the spirit in which they lived their lives.

They seem to be based on a composition originally by Kent Keith, but much of the second half has been re-written in a more spiritual way. Both versions are shown below.

1. The version found written on the wall in Mother Teresa's home for children in Calcutta:

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you. Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten. Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough. Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.

-this version is credited to Mother Teresa

2. The Original Version:

The Paradoxical Commandments

by Dr. Kent M. Keith

1. People are illogical, unreasonable, and self-centered.
Love them anyway.
2. If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives.
Do good anyway.
3. If you are successful, you win false friends and true enemies.
Succeed anyway.
4. The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow.
Do good anyway.
5. Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.
Be honest and frank anyway.
6. The biggest men and women with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men and women with the smallest minds.
Think big anyway.
7. People favor underdogs but follow only top dogs.
Fight for a few underdogs anyway.
8. What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight.
Build anyway.
9. People really need help but may attack you if you do help them.
Help people anyway.
10. Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth.
Give the world the best you have anyway.

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"The Paradoxical Commandments" were written by Kent M. Keith in 1968 as part of a booklet for student leaders.