

Dear Young Persons -

Here are some of the things I think I have learned over the years;

Be yourself: in the sense of what you wear and eat and your pursuit of interests. Don't try to force yourself into a mold or model that really isn't "you". Being clean and neat is always a plus because that is just being considerate of others: no one wants to be near someone dirty. But aside from that, the choice is yours. Don't eat to be polite and don't eat "recreationally"; this will go a long way to keeping your body healthy.

Be careful what you put into your body. After all, it is the only one you will ever have. You can always get other stuff, but not a new body. So make getting the best quality food your first budget priority.

Horace said, about 2000 years ago, "Ne Quid Nimis" ("Not too much of anything.") Boy he said a mouthful there. A little of what you like won't hurt you, but leave it at that. Stay away from anything that is addictive. It's dumb to get into the position of being a slave to any mere substance. Indulge in alcohol, for example, moderately; any time you think you "Must" have a drink is the time to NOT get one.

Be kind. It seldom costs very much and it does so much good. Never underestimate the power of kindness and love. They are as important as life itself. The Karma concept is right: "what goes around comes around" and forgiveness feels much better inside than anger and grudges. Have the courage to say you are sorry when you did something wrong.

Always remember you are not living in a disposable stage set. The plants and animals and other creatures are all alive and have their own agendas to satisfy, so be respectful of them and their spaces. We all share the same earth, and everybody lives downstream from something, so try not to dirty the earth with trash and toxic substances. You can't imagine the difference between what the outdoors looked like in the 1940's and the way it looks now; it is the change that happened in my lifetime that I most bitterly regret.

The race is not always won in the end by the swiftest, and courage can make a big difference in the outcome of situations. So try not to be ruled by fear. If you search your soul and are sure in your heart you are right, summon your strength and proceed.

- Caroline Dieterle