

From: "A.D. Dirkzwager" <djatirot@me.com>

Subject: 'Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans.' (John Lennon)

Date: 22 September 2021 at 12:39:59 CEST

To: "Faysal M. El Khalil" <faysal.elkhalil@continentalbeverages.com>

My dear Faysal,

There are two certainties in life and those are taxes and death. I never considered that Vera could ever get Alzheimer's disease. The mind barely functions without the extraordinarily useful tool of memory.

Last week we made a four-day city trip to Bruges/Belgium with a couple of friends. (The city of Bruges is medieval mysterious, unabashedly Burgundian and a metropolis for centuries; Bruges' city center impresses with its cultural-historical patrimony and has been on the World Heritage List since 2000.) We visited several museums and enjoyed their collection of paintings. Vera also enjoys the moment seeing the the old Flemish paintings, however she can't memorised the visit. There's no point in talking to her about our visit to Bruges, when we're back in Amsterdam. In early Alzheimer's, the 'hippocampus', the motor of our memory, is especially affected, which ensures that we do things automatically and acquire new knowledge. Alzheimer's patients begin to forget and slowly go back to childhood. They hardly notice the present and do not create a new memory.

They can ask the same question ten times and tell a story for the twenty-fifth time without knowing that they have already told it and to whom. What is stored last is forgotten first, but nurse's rhymes they can still reproduce. The next stage they can't speak anymore and that's sad. However, less so for the patient, who is barely aware of this.

Other topic: '**Mens sana in corpore sano.**'

The Roman poet Juvenal has a number of additional suggestions for the Buchinger Wilhelmi therapeutic fasting method, which I don't want to withhold from you

The phrase 'Mens sana in corpore sano.' comes from *Satire X* of the Roman poet **Juvenal** (10.356), born 55 AD, **Aquino, Italy** and died in the 2nd century AD. It is the first in a list of what is desirable in life:

orandum est ut sit mens sana in corpore sano.

*fortem posce animum mortis terrore carentem,
qui spatium vitae extremum inter munera ponat
naturae, qui ferre queat quoscumque labores,
nesciat irasci, cupiat nihil et potiores
Herculis aerumnas credat saevosque labores
et venere et cenis et pluma Sardanapalli.
monstro quod ipse tibi possis dare; semita certe
tranquillae per virtutem patet unica vitae.*

You should pray for a healthy mind in a healthy body.

Ask for a stout heart that has no fear of death,
and deems length of days the least of Nature's gifts
that can endure any kind of toil,
that knows neither wrath nor desire and thinks
the woes and hard labors of Hercules better than
the loves and banquets and downy cushions of Sardanapalus.
What I commend to you, you can give to yourself;
For assuredly, the only road to a life of peace is virtue.

*et venere et cenis et piuma
Sardanapalli.
monstro quod ipse tibi possis dare;
semita certe
tranquillae per virtutem patet unica
vitae.*

the loves and banquets and downy cushions
of Sardanapalus.
What I commend to you, you can give to
yourself;
For assuredly, the only road to a life of peace
is virtue.

Buchinger Wilhelmi's therapeutic fasting method is based on achieving a balance between rest and exercise, relaxation and exertion, contemplation and inspiration. As a result, so-called auxiliary methods such as gentle exercise, hiking, massages or baths play an equally important role in Buchinger therapeutic fasting as inspiration through art and culture or personal development through meditation, coaching and accompanying forms of psychotherapy.

Again another topic,

Saevis tranquillus in undis. (Lat.) Calm amid the raging waves

Apparently referring to Ovid's *Metamorph.* 11,410-748, the story of the kingfisher calmly drifting in the storm; this hexameter-like rule, however, is found neither there nor elsewhere in the Classics. Perhaps a Humanist from Orange's time is the author of it, but on what occasion the Prince then adopted this slogan is uncertain.

William the Silent (24 April 1533 – 10 July 1584), also known as **William the Taciturn** (translated from [Dutch](#): *Willem de Zwijger*),^{[1][2]} or **William of Orange** ([Dutch](#): *Willem van Oranje*), was the main leader of the [Dutch Revolt](#) against the Spanish [Habsburgs](#) that set off the [Eighty Years' War](#) (1568–1648) and resulted in the formal independence of the [United Provinces](#) in 1581. Born into the [House of Nassau](#), he became [Prince of Orange](#) in 1544 and is thereby the founder of the [Orange-Nassau branch](#) and the ancestor of the [monarchy of the Netherlands](#). In the Netherlands, he is also known as [Father of the Fatherland](#) (**[Pater Patriae](#)**).

Faysal, your decision to continue living in Lebanon under the circumstances you described in your last email, is commendable, but incomprehensible to any sane person. In any case my suggestion is to adopt our *pater patriae* slogan 'calm amid raging waves' for the brave lineage of El Khalil as it is very appropriate as you continue your residence in Beirut.

May's character is one of a long-distance runner's perseverance to organize a marathon in a shattered unstable country. She deserves our great respect.

This email contained the answer to a question I asked earlier about your succession in the bottling business: Sari, your youngest son. He is groomed for the job and I imagine it will be a great relief to you.

Finally, given Vera's health situation, we are unlikely to accept your kind invitation to come to Lebanon. Even in Bruges in the company of

friends from our student days (long-term memory) she was at times a bit disoriented.

In my next mail we will discuss the phenomenon of 'friendship' on the basis of Michel de Montaigne (1533-1599)

Dear Faysal, wish you all the energy and courage to cope with the circumstances in the Humpty Dumpty countries.

Please don't forget to pay our respects to the "formidable" May, who will put all her energy into getting Lebanon back together for one day on the day the marathon is held next November.

Beste personal regards from both of us V & A (these capitals do not stand for Victoria and Albert)

P..S. The book 'War and Peace' is, belief me, is a very interesting story (non fiction)

