

张艳玲◎主编

*The Most influential Philosophy of Life*

# 最有影响的人生哲理

下 册

这些英文，都有共同的特点：经典、优美、百读不厌。既可以陶冶情操，增长知识，给人以快乐的感受，又可激励人们向上。这些美文历经时间的考验而沉淀下来，成为历代传诵不衰的美文。



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## *Dad's Strength*

Anonymous

The first memory I have of him—of anything, really—is his strength.

It was in the late afternoon in a house under construction near ours. The unfinished wood floor had large, terrifying holes whose yawning darkness I knew led to nowhere good.

His powerful hands, then age 33, wrapped all the way around my tiny arms, then age 4, and easily swung me up to his shoulders to command all I surveyed.

The relationship between a son and his father changes over time. It may grow and flourish in mutual maturity. It may sour in resented dependence or independence.

With many children living in single — parent



homes today, it may not even exist.

But to a little boy right after World War II , a father seemed a god with strange strengths and uncanny powers enabling him to do and know things that no mortal could do or know. Amazing things, like putting a bicycle chain back on, just like that. Or building a hamster cage. Or guiding a jigsaw so it forms the letter F; I learned the alphabet that way in those pre—television days.

There were, of course, rules to learn. First coming the handshake. None of those fishy little finger grips, but a good firm squeeze accompanied by an equally strong gaze into the other's eyes. " The first thing anyone knows about you is your handshake," he would say. And we'd practice it each night on his return from work, the serious toddler in the battered Cleveland Indian's cap running up to the giant father to shake hands again and again until it was firm enough.

As time passed, there were other rules to learn. " Always do your best." " Do it now." "



Never lie!" And most importantly, "You can do whatever you have to do."

By my teens, he wasn't telling me what to do anymore, which was scary and heady at the same time. He provided perspective, not telling me what was around the great corner of life but letting me know there was a lot more than just today and the next, which I hadn't thought of.

One day, I realize now, there was a change. I wasn't trying to please him so much as I was trying to impress him. I never asked him to come to my football games. He had a high — pressure career, and it meant driving through most of Friday night. But for all the big games, when I looked over at the sideline, there was that familiar fedora. And by God, did the opposing team captain ever get a firm handshake and a gaze he would remember.

Then, a school fact contradicted something he said. Impossible that he could be wrong, but there it was in the book. These accumulated over time, along with personal experiences, to buttress my own



developing sense of values.

And I could tell we had each taken our own, perfectly normal paths.

I began to see, too, his blind spots, his prejudices and his weaknesses.

I never threw these up at him. He hadn't to me, and, anyway, he seemed to need protection. I stopped asking his advice; the experiences he drew from no longer seemed relevant to the decisions I had to make.

He volunteered advice for a while. But then, in more recent years, politics and issues gave way to talk of empty errands and, always, to ailments.

From his bed, he showed me the many sores and scars on his misshapen body and all the bottles for medicine. "Sometimes," he confided, "I would just like to lie down and go to sleep and not wake up."

After much thought and practice ( "You can do whatever you have to do. " ), one night last winter, I sat down by his bed and remembered for an instant



those terrifying dark holes in another house 35 years before. I told my father how much I loved him. I described all the things people were doing for him. But, I said, he kept eating poorly, hiding in his room and violating the doctor's orders.

No amount of love could make someone else care about life, I said; it was a two-way street. He wasn't doing his best. The decision was his.

He said he knew how hard my words had been to say and how proud he was of me. "I had the best teacher," I said. "You can do whatever you have to do." He smiled a little. And we shook hands, firmly, for the last time.

Several days later, at about 4 A. M., my mother heard Dad shuffling about their dark room. "I have some things I have to do," he said. He paid a bundle of bills. He composed for my mother a long list of legal and financial what-to-do's "in case of emergency." And he wrote me a note.

Then he walked back to his bed and laid himself



down. He went to sleep, naturally. And he did not wake up.

◆◆◆ 熟词空间 ◆◆◆

1. construction 建筑；结构；推定

2. terrifying 吓唬；威胁

3. yawning 打呵欠；张开大口的

4. flourish 挥动；舞动；花边

5. maturity 成熟；壮年

6. hamster 仓鼠

7. jigsaw 钢丝锯

8. squeeze 压；挤；压迫

9. perspective 透视的

10. contradict 反驳；反对；否认

11. prejudice 偏见；成见；伤害

12. misshapen 残疾的；丑陋的





## 爸爸的力量

佚名

我关于他的记忆——对所有事的最初记忆，实际上就是他的力量。

那是一个下午的早些时候，我家附近有一个正在修建的房子，在尚未完工的木地板上有一个个巨大的可怕的洞，那些张着大口的黑洞在我看来是通向不祥之处的。

那时 33 岁的爸爸用他那强壮有力的双手一把握住我的小胳膊，那时我才 4 岁，然后轻而易举地把我放上他的肩膀，让我把一切都尽收眼底。

父子间的关系是随着岁月的流逝而变化的，它会在彼此成熟的过程中增长，也会在令人不愉快的依赖或独立的关系中产生不和睦。

如今，许多孩子生活在单亲家庭中，这种关系可能根本不存在。

然而，就一个生活在第二次世界大战刚刚结束时



期的小男孩而言，父亲就像神，他拥有神奇的力量和神秘的能力，他几乎无所不能，无所不知。那些奇妙的事儿是给自行车上链条，或是制造一个仓鼠笼子，或是教我玩拼图玩具，拼出一个字母“F”来。在那个电视机还未诞生的年代，我就是通过这种学习方式学会字母表的。

当然，还得学一些做人的道理。首先是握手。这不是单单指那种冷冰冰的手指相握，而是一种非常坚定有力的紧握，并且同样坚定有力地注视对方的眼睛。

老爸常说：“人们认识你首先是通过与你握手。”每晚，他下班回家后，我们俩便练习握手。小时候的我，戴着顶破克利夫兰印第安帽，一本正经地跌跌撞撞地跑向巨人般的父亲，开始我们的握手。一次又一次，直到握得坚定有力。

随着时间的逝去，我还有许多其他的道理要学。比如：“始终尽力而为”，“从现在做起”，“永不撒谎”，以及最重要的一条：“一切你必须去做的事你都能做到。”

当我长到十几岁时，老爸不再叫我这样做或是那样做，这既令人害怕又令人兴奋。他教给我判断事物的方法。他不是告诉我，在人生的重大转折点上将发



生些什么，而是让我明白，除了今天和明天，还有很长的路要走，这一点我是从未考虑过的。

有一天，事情起了变化，这是我现在才意识到的。我不再那么迫切地想要取悦于老爸，而是急切地想要给他留下深刻的印象。我以前从来没有请他来看我的橄榄球赛。他工作压力很大，这意味着每个礼拜五要拼命工作到半夜。但每次大型比赛，当我抬头环顾看台时，那顶熟悉的软呢帽总在那儿。并且感谢上帝，对方队长总能得到一次让他难以忘记的握手——坚定而有力，伴以同样坚定的注视。

后来，在学校学到的一个事实否定了老爸说过的某些东西。他不可能会错的，可书上却是这样写的。诸如此类的事日积月累，加上我的个人经历，支持了我逐渐成形的价值观。

我可以这么说：我俩开始各走各的道路了。

就在这时，我还开始发现他对某些事的无知，还有他的偏见，他的弱点。

我从未在他面前提起这些，他也从未在我面前说起，而且，不管怎么样，他看起来需要我的保护了。我不再向他征求意见；他的那些经验也似乎不再适合我要做出的决定。



老爸当了一段时间的“自愿顾问”，但后来，特别是最近几年里，他谈话中的政治与国家大事让位给了空洞的使命与疾病。

躺在床上，他给我看岁月留在他躯体上的疤痕，还有他所有的药瓶儿。他对我说：“有时我真想躺下睡一觉，永远不再醒来。”

通过仔细思考与亲身体验（“凡是你必须做的事你都能做到”），去年冬天的一个夜晚，我坐在老爸床边，忽然想起35年前那一栋房子里可怕的巨大黑洞。我告诉老爸我有多爱他。我对他讲述了人们为他所做的一切事情。而我又说，他总是吃得太少，还躲在房间里，不听医生的劝告。

我说，再多的爱也不能使一个人自己去热爱生命：这是一条双行道，而他并没有尽力，一切都取决于他自己。

他说他明白要我说出这些话有多么困难，他是多么为我骄傲。“我有位最好的老师，”我说，“凡是你必须做的事你都能做到”。他微微一笑，之后我们握手，那是一次坚定的握手，也是最后的一次。

几天后，大约凌晨四点，母亲听到父亲拖着脚步在他们漆黑的房间里走来走去。他说：“有些事我必须



去做。”他支付了一叠账单，给母亲留了一张很长很长的条子，上面列有法律及经济上该做的事，“以防不测”，还他留了封短信给我。

然后，他走回自己的床边，躺下。他睡了，十分安详，再也没有醒来。



## *Cost Of Love*

Anonymous

One night when my wife was preparing dinner,  
our little son took a piece of paper to her which read:

For washing the car..... \$ 5. 00

For making my own bed this week..... \$ 1. 00

Going to the provision shop..... \$ 0. 50

Playing with little sister ..... \$ 0. 25

Taking out the rubbish..... \$ 1. 00

Getting a good report card..... \$ 5. 00

And for sweeping the common corridor..... \$ 2. 00

Total ..... \$ 14. 75

His mother looked at him standing there expecting  
payment. I could see a thousand memories flashed  
through her mind. So she picked up the pen and turning  
the paper over, this is what she wrote:

For 9 months I carried you, growing inside



me.....No Charge

For the nights I sat up with you, doctored and  
prayed for you.....No Charge

For the toys, food and clothes and wiping your  
nose.....No Charge

When you add it all up, the full cost of my  
love.....No Charge

Well, when he finished reading, he had great big  
tears in his eyes. He looked at his mother and said,  
“Mummy, I love you.” Then he took the pen and in  
great big letters wrote on the “bill” “All paid.”

### ◆◆◆ 熟词空间 ◆◆◆

1. preparing 预备的；准备的
2. provision 供应品；食品粮食
3. corridor 走廊；通路
4. payment 支付；缴纳；报酬
5. memory 记忆；回忆
6. Charge 要求收费；索价
7. bill 账单；清单；报单



## 爱的账单

佚名

一天晚上，就在妻子准备晚餐的时候，我们的小儿子拿着一张纸给他的母亲看。上面写道：

洗车——5 美元

本周整理我的房间——1 美元

去商店——0.5 美元

照看小妹妹——0.25 美元

外出倒垃圾——1 美元

成绩单获得良好——5 美元

清理通道——2 美元

共计应得——14.75 美元

他的母亲望着站在那儿满怀希望期待付款的儿子。我几乎可以看到她脑子里闪过数以千计的想法。于是，她拿起钢笔把儿子写过的纸翻过来。在上面写道：

你在我的腹中成长，我为你怀胎 9 月——无价；

我陪伴着你为你求医、为你祈祷的那些晚上——  
无价；





我为你准备玩具、食物、衣服甚至为你擦鼻涕，  
那——无价；

儿子，你把以上所有的累加起来，我为你付出的全部的爱是无价的。

儿子读完母亲写的话，双眼含着豆大的泪花，他注视着他的妈妈说：“妈妈，我爱你。”他拿出钢笔在他的“账单”上用大大的字母写道：“全部还清。”