

This book documents lessons the two authors learned over their lifetimes (the view from 30,000 feet); interprets their meanings from personal experiences (the view from ground level); and hopefully passes this information on to their children at the starting line (the view in the rear-view mirror).

LIFE'S LESSONS LEARNED... so far...

by Gary J. Kelman and Richard T. Gray

Order the complete book from the publisher Booklocker.com

<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/10298.html?s=pdf>

or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.

***Life's Lessons
Learned...so far...***



**Gary J. Kelman
Richard T. Gray**

Copyright © 2019 Gary J. Kelman and Richard T. Gray

Paperback ISBN: 978-1-64438-541-8

Hardcover ISBN: 978-1-64438-542-5

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author.

Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida.

Printed on acid-free paper.

BookLocker.com, Inc.

2019

First Edition

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Kelman, Gary J. and Gray, Richard T.

Life's Lessons Learned...so far... by Gary J. Kelman and

Richard T. Gray

PHILOSOPHY / Social | SELF-HELP / Personal Growth / Success |

BIOGRAPHY & AUTOBIOGRAPHY / Personal Memoirs

Library of Congress Control Number: 2019902238

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROLOGUE	ix
SECTION I - SELF	1
CHAPTER 1 - ACT “AS IF”	3
CHAPTER 2 - ADAPT TO THE CHANGING REALITIES	9
CHAPTER 3 - AGE GRACEFULLY	17
CHAPTER 4 - ANGER KILLS THE ANGRY	23
CHAPTER 5 - BE A MENSCH, NOT A SCHMUCK	29
CHAPTER 6 - BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR	35
CHAPTER 7 - BE DECISIVE	39
CHAPTER 8 - BE KIND, BE KIND, BE KIND.....	45
CHAPTER 9 - BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE	51
CHAPTER 10 - BUILD A GREAT SUPPORT SYSTEM	59
CHAPTER 11 - BY AND LARGE, BE A REALIST	65
CHAPTER 12 - <i>CARPE DIEM</i> (SEIZE THE DAY).....	71
CHAPTER 13 - CHOOSE HAPPINESS	79
CHAPTER 14 - CHOOSE YOUR BATTLES WISELY	85
CHAPTER 15 - CHOOSE YOUR PARENTS WISELY	91
CHAPTER 16 - THE DEVIL IS IN THE DETAILS	95
CHAPTER 17 - DON’T MISREPRESENT YOURSELF	99
CHAPTER 18 - EMPATHIZE	105
CHAPTER 19 - EVEN STEVEN?	109
CHAPTER 20 - EVIL IS HERE AND NOW.....	113
CHAPTER 21 - EXPERIENCE TRUMPS ALL.....	121
CHAPTER 22 - FAMOUS LAST WORDS.....	127
CHAPTER 23 - FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED	131
CHAPTER 24 - GET OVER YOURSELF	137
CHAPTER 25 - GOODNESS IS HERE AND NOW	141
CHAPTER 26 - GROW A THICKER SKIN	147
CHAPTER 27 - HELP!	151
CHAPTER 28 - HISTORY TRUMPS ALL.....	157
CHAPTER 29 - <i>HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE</i>	163
CHAPTER 30 - KNOW WHEN TO HANG IT UP	167
CHAPTER 31 - LEARN BY DOING	171

CHAPTER 32 - LIFE IS TOUGH.....	175
CHAPTER 33 - LIFE'S A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT	181
CHAPTER 34 - LISTEN MORE, TALK LESS.....	187
CHAPTER 35 - LIVE BELOW YOUR MEANS	193
CHAPTER 36 - LOVE A PET	199
CHAPTER 37 - LOVE YOUR COUNTRY...SERVE YOUR COUNTRY	203
CHAPTER 38 - MAKING A DIFFERENCE TRUMPS MAKING A BUCK	207
CHAPTER 39 - MIGHT MAKES RIGHT.....	211
CHAPTER 40 - NEVER STOP LEARNING AND ENGAGING.....	215
CHAPTER 41 - PERCEPTION IS REALITY	221
CHAPTER 42 - PRIVATE FACE VS PUBLIC FACE	227
CHAPTER 43 - PROBLEM SOLVING: RECOGNITION, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, BRAINSTORMING.....	231
CHAPTER 44 - SEE THE BIG PICTURE	237
CHAPTER 45 - <i>SEMPER PARATUS</i>	243
CHAPTER 46 - SPEAK UP FOR YOURSELF.....	247
CHAPTER 47 - THINK TWICE, ACT ONCE.....	251
CHAPTER 48 - TIMING IS EVERYTHING	255
CHAPTER 49 - TRUST, BUT VERIFY.....	259
CHAPTER 50 - TRUTH IS ELUSIVE	265
CHAPTER 51 - THE UPSIDE OF FAILURE	271
CHAPTER 52 - WAR IS HELL.....	277
CHAPTER 53 - WHATEVER.....	283
CHAPTER 54 - WORTHY REWARDS REQUIRE WORTHWHILE RISKS	285
CHAPTER 55 - YOU'RE NOT YOUR RESUME	291
SECTION II - RELATIONSHIPS	295
CHAPTER 1 - ACCEPT CRITICISM GRACIOUSLY AND GRATEFULLY	297
CHAPTER 2 - BE ASSERTIVE, NOT AGGRESSIVE	303
CHAPTER 3 - BE INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY.....	307
CHAPTER 4 - CHANGE YOURSELF, NOT SOMEONE ELSE.....	313
CHAPTER 5 - CHOOSE YOUR SPOUSE'S PARENTS WISELY.....	319
CHAPTER 6 - COMING CLEAN IS A SLIPPERY SLOPE	323
CHAPTER 7 - THE DEVIL IS STILL IN THE DETAILS	327

LIFE'S LESSONS LEARNED...so far...

CHAPTER 8 - EVERYBODY HAS HIS/HER PRICE/NEEDS.....	331
CHAPTER 9 - GOSSIP/SLANDER ARE DEADLY SINS.....	335
CHAPTER 10 - HAPPINESS IS BEING MARRIED TO YOUR BEST FRIEND.....	341
CHAPTER 11 - THE LAW OF ENTROPY	345
CHAPTER 12 - LIFE IS ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS.....	349
CHAPTER 13 - (STILL) LISTEN MORE, TALK LESS	353
CHAPTER 14 - LOVE: THE MOST POWERFUL AGENT OF CHANGE	355
CHAPTER 15 - NO ONE MINDS THE PEDESTAL	359
CHAPTER 16 - PROTECT YOUR FAMILY, AT ALL COSTS	363
CHAPTER 17 - RELATIONSHIPS ARE ALL ABOUT EMPATHY	369
CHAPTER 18 - RELATIONSHIPS ARE TWO WAY STREETS.....	375
CHAPTER 19 - TAKE THE HIGH ROAD	381
CHAPTER 20 - TRUST PUTTING OTHERS' INTERESTS FIRST.....	387
CHAPTER 21 - UPS AND DOWNS ARE THE NORM.....	391
CHAPTER 22 - WE ALL FACE THE SAME CHALLENGES.....	395
CHAPTER 23 - "WE ALL NEED THE EGGS".....	399
CHAPTER 24 - WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER	403
CHAPTER 25 - WE'RE BETTER TOGETHER.....	407
SECTION III - CAREER.....	411
CHAPTER 1 - ALWAYS BE CLOSING	413
CHAPTER 2 - BE DECISIVE	417
CHAPTER 3 - BE HONEST AND FACE REALITY	421
CHAPTER 4 - BEWARE THE FEEDING FRENZY	431
CHAPTER 5 - BUILD A GREAT RESOURCE/SUPPORT SYSTEM	437
CHAPTER 6 - CAREER IS ALL ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS	443
CHAPTER 7 - CRUSADE, DON'T COMPLAIN	449
CHAPTER 8 - THE DEVIL IS STILL IN THE DETAILS	453
CHAPTER 9 - DON'T OVEREXTEND YOURSELF	457
CHAPTER 10 - EVERYONE HAS HIS/HER PRICE.....	463
CHAPTER 11 - EXPERIENCE TRUMPS ALL.....	469
CHAPTER 12 - FIND YOUR RABBI.....	475
CHAPTER 13 - HEDGE YOUR BETS; <i>SEMPER PARATUS</i>	481
CHAPTER 14 - HIRE THE BEST AND THE BRIGHTEST	485
CHAPTER 15 - IT'S THE ECONOMY, STUPID.....	491
CHAPTER 16 - KEEP YOUR HEAD ON A SWIVEL.....	495

CHAPTER 17 - KNOW WHEN TO HANG IT UP.....	501
CHAPTER 18 - KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.....	511
CHAPTER 19 - LEARN TO DELEGATE	517
CHAPTER 20 - LOVE YOUR JOB.....	525
CHAPTER 21 - NO NEED TO OUTFRONT THE BEAR	531
CHAPTER 22 - THE PEDESTAL STILL ROCKS.....	537
CHAPTER 23 - PUTTING OUT STILL WORKS	541
CHAPTER 24 - RESPECT AND TRUST YOUR PAWNS	545
CHAPTER 25 - RESULTS TRUMP SPEED.....	551
CHAPTER 26 - SEE THE BIG PICTURE	555
CHAPTER 27 - SLOW AND STEADY WINS THE RACE.....	561
CHAPTER 28 - STAY BALANCED TO PREVENT BURNOUT	565
CHAPTER 29 - STILL, LISTEN MORE, TALK LESS.....	571
CHAPTER 30 - S.W.O.T.	575
CHAPTER 31 - THINK OUT OF THE BOX.....	579
CHAPTER 32 - TIMING IS EVERYTHING	585
CHAPTER 33 - THE UPSIDE TO FAILURE.....	589
CHAPTER 34 - USE YOUR HEAD; BE A THINKER	595
CHAPTER 35 - WORK IS (LARGELY) ALL ABOUT DOCUMENTATION	603
CHAPTER 36 - YOU ARE YOUR RESUME.....	609
EPILOGUE	613

PROLOGUE

One lazy summer afternoon, under a cloudless blue sky with the sun beating down, we were sitting outside by the pool with margaritas in hand, chewing the fat and waxing philosophical. Having exchanged oral pleasantries and the news of the day, and with our lives in a good place, the environment was perfect to ponder playfully the age-old questions of “*Donde hemos estado*” (where have we been?), “*Donde nos encontramos ahora?*” (where are we now?), and “*Quo vadis?*” (where are we going?). We asked ourselves and each other, “If we had it to do all over again, would we have done anything differently?”, and, if so, “What?,” perfect chatter on that perfect day. We had both navigated our personal Waterloos, come out (mostly) whole on the other side, and were grateful for our lot in life. But what had we learned from a combined 100+ years of life experience?

We didn’t solve the problems of the world that day, but a seed was planted: what had this experience called life taught us, tempered in us, and impressed upon us? Were we better, wiser, than in our youth, and could we pass these lessons along to the next generation, to save them the headaches and heartaches that we had so blindly endured? Were our experiences personal or universal? Were there basic common truths that transcended age and time, occupation and focus, background and *zeitgeist*?

From this casual mental masturbation grew a project resulting in this book. “**The unexamined life is not worth living**” is a famous dictum apparently uttered by Socrates at his trial for impiety and corrupting youth, for which he was subsequently sentenced to death. We had no desire to corrupt anyone, but rather to look back on our experiences and try to make sense of them, for our sake and perhaps for our children as well.

Each of us spent some time jotting down worthwhile *lessons* we had learned from the school of hard knocks, from childhood to maturity and all that's in between, and codified them into three seemingly natural categories: lessons about *self*, lessons about *relationships*, and lessons about *career*. Over a lifetime these groupings seemed to cover most of our experiences and initiatives, and our diverse lessons all seemed to fit intuitively into one (if not more) of these classifications. Not content or confident that our lessons were truly ubiquitous, we searched for similar insights by the great scholars of our time and yesteryear (including biblical sources), and gathered quotations by recognized intellectuals and sages who had similar intuitions.

To clarify and more fully understand our observations, we wrote interpretations of these aphorisms, for ourselves and whoever else chose to tap into our lives.

And to personalize and particularize our experiences, we each wrote an illustrative vignette for each lesson from our own histories that support and explain these conclusions.

Finally, we wrote *takeaways* that summarize and punch home the message and moral.

Given our vastly different backgrounds and career choices (Gary an orthopedic surgeon, Rich a career on Wall Street), it was an interesting experiment to compare notes, and analyze whether our lives, as different as they seemed on the surface, had more in common than meets the eye at first blush.

The process was interesting, informative, and surprising in more ways than one.

We're not dead yet, and there may very well be a sequel to this compilation. But for now, we invite our readers to experience *our* experiences and draw their own conclusions. We've done some things right and enjoyed those serendipitous choices; we've done

LIFE'S LESSONS LEARNED...so far...

many things wrong and suffered the inevitable consequences. And so, we unabashedly present our take on life, with all the warts, wrinkles, and war wounds that unavoidably accompany this journey. Hopefully you'll find something that resonates with your own adventures, and maybe even teaches a thing or two. We can only hope that *we've* learned something, let alone you...

EPILOGUE

--The Golden Rule-- the last and most important lesson

The great Talmudic sage Hillel was born in Babylonia in the first century BCE. As a young man he came to the Holy Land to study Torah at the feet of the sages of Jerusalem, and became one of the most famous, respected, and revered scholars of Torah.

One well-known legend in the Talmud (Shabbat 31a) tells of a non-Jew who wanted to convert to Judaism *on one condition*: he would embrace Judaism only if a rabbi would teach him the entire Torah while he, the prospective convert, stood on one foot.

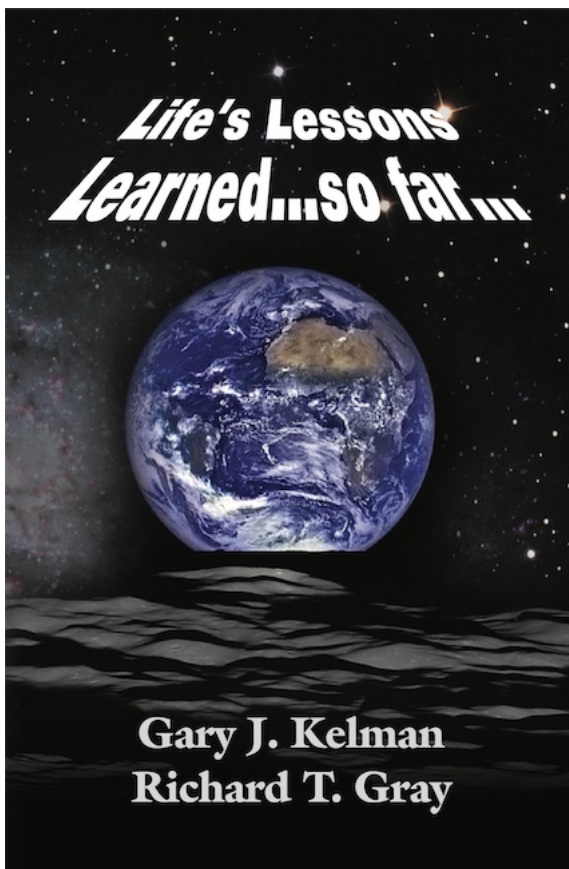
He approached one rabbi after another who were all appalled and offended by this absurd proposition, and, single-mindedly, each sent him packing.

Persistent in his resolve, the man finally approached Hillel with his same request. This gentle sage accepted the challenge and said:

“What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. That is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation of this.”

Enough said...

Still learning...gjk and rtg



This book documents lessons the two authors learned over their lifetimes (the view from 30,000 feet); interprets their meanings from personal experiences (the view from ground level); and hopefully passes this information on to their children at the starting line (the view in the rear-view mirror).

LIFE'S LESSONS LEARNED... so far...

by Gary J. Kelman and Richard T. Gray

Order the complete book from the publisher Booklocker.com

<https://www.booklocker.com/p/books/10298.html?s=pdf>

or from your favorite neighborhood
or online bookstore.