



Echoes of Wisdom

Words of Life from
Father to Son on
Sports, Women, and
Everything in Between

By Ron Ross



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Dedication

To my wife Karron, for your countless acts of love each day. You are an amazing woman.

To my son Jonathan, the most brilliant young man I know. You were my inspiration for this book. I am forever cheering for you.

To my daughter Marissa, you are my fellow creative soul — your endless reservoir of creative talent inspires me.

To my brother Rich, for your encouragement to share this book with others.

To my mother Virginia Ross, for your continuous love, support, and endless generosity.

To my father Richard Ross, for being my role model as a father, a man, and a spiritual leader. Know that your words are life to me and live on. Thanks for your love and support.

Thank you God for being my light and inspiration.

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Introduction

The idea for this book has been on my heart for the last few years. Once I decided to write it with my son Jonathan in mind, I found my voice and the words came easily and abundantly. Besides our physical appearances and the same last name, my son and I also share a love for movies, sports, and comedy. I made use of this connection to express my thoughts in a manner that I hope you will find humorous, interesting, and enlightening. It was a tall order, but I was up for the challenge.

This book was truly a gift of love that I am now sharing with you. Two things really encouraged me to move forward with the decision to share this book with the public. The first was my family's encouragement about its value and ability to uplift. The second was watching my son pick up this book and

really read it, laugh, and talk to me about the stories. I know you will enjoy reading this and be blessed. Jonathan said, "I am not reading it cover to cover. I am just picking out certain stories."

Bingo! That was exactly my hope. Each story is written in a manner that you could read during the commercials of the next big game. So while you are sitting by the microwave waiting for the popcorn to finish, open this book, and read one of the stories. And since you still have one more minute before the commercials end, don't forget to melt some butter for the popcorn and read another story.



Don't Cast Your Pearls before Swine

Have you ever had somebody trash something that you really like? I have, but it is always good to remember that others will not always value the same things that you do. It is just that simple. The Bible verse, which just happens to be my favorite, Matthew 7:6 reads, "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces (NIV)." It is a good reminder to focus on what is important

Just the other day, my son was telling his mom about a new R & B artist, Robin Thicke. He was offended when I declared, "He sounds like a girl." The pig could be anyone in your life. In this particular example, I was the pig, or better yet, the fool of the story. It was my way

of just trying to be funny, but in the process, I trampled on something my son found precious.

The point is that a pig cannot distinguish a pearl from a common rock. They have no interest in or ability to appreciate fine jewels. Additionally, parents rarely appreciate their children's fashion — this is to be expected. Many things will be precious to you such as relationships, ideas, or dreams. When you find that precious thing, it is human nature to want to share the good news.

Sometimes, and quite unwittingly, our loved ones can become the swine in our story. Time will show you which pearls you can share with which friends. A pig can't appreciate a fine piece of jewelry, but he will appreciate a scrap of meat. The universe will bring the people into your life that will appreciate the gifts that you bear.

Nevertheless, the other side of this lesson is just as important. I played the swine in this example. Playing the pig is a dirty role because it requires you to have a silly mind-set and to wallow in the dirt, mud, and poop of life. While you will occasionally find yourself playing this role, make sure that is not a role that you play too often.



Pay It Forward

In 2000, there was this corny movie called *Pay It Forward* starring Kevin Spacey and Haley Joel Osment — you know, the “I see dead people” kid. Yes, him. Anyway, despite its high “corn” score, the movie had a moral that I want to talk about. That moral is to give or do something good for someone first. There are many reasons that this is a critical and important principle in life. Remember, this will be a key principle in your relationship with the lady of your life one day.

Pay it forward. There is nothing better than kicking back on a Sunday afternoon and watching your favorite squad play football. Perhaps you will have a buddy with you, your son, or if you are really blessed, you will have your lady right by your side. Paying it forward

is really about enjoying the football game in peace. Every lady in your life will have a short list of things that she wants you to do. Finding this short list may take some time. More than likely, she has been telling you what she wants and needs. Just stop, listen, and take note about what she is saying. For some ladies — like my wife — it is about an act of service such as doing your fair share of chores around the house. My research suggests that helping her before she has to ask is huge.

Recently, my wife was responsible for the family conference where she works. She had been complaining about the lack of active participation from her coworkers. I decided to go and help out. I confess that at the last minute, I fussed about it, but I still went and volunteered for three short hours. As you know, the average televised game lasts for three short hours — I love how things balance in the universe. Also, my wife wanted to go to the movies that day. I love movies, but I was not in the mood. However, I pressed on and paid it forward.

Now, it is 9:00 a.m. on this glorious football morning. I made coffee, cleaned the bathroom, and I am writing about paying it forward. By the time the pigskin is kicked off at 1:00 p.m., I

will be in hog heaven. I have no worries about disappointing my mate or her disturbing my game with those shakes of her head. In fact, it would not surprise me if she joins me to watch a bit of the game (which I love), buys my favorite snack, and cooks my favorite meal. Is that malicious? No. Is it manipulative? A little. Is it wise? Absolutely. In the end, as men, all we want is peace and quiet so we can enjoy the game. Touchdown!



She Always Makes the First Move

I just witnessed a glorious sunrise from the Philadelphia Airport. I am in a great mood, so pour yourself a tall glass of chocolate milk, and let's chat about women. My dad told me when I was thirteen that women always make the first move. Yes, this principle is absolute, factual, and indisputable. Trust me on this one. Here is the reality: they are just light-years ahead of us when it comes to affairs of the heart. While you are still trying to figure out if she is cute enough, she has already determined whether you would make a great father to her 2.3 children, and she has selected their names and colleges.

It makes perfect sense from an evolution perspective. Cavemen beat their competition to death for the affection of that special little lady.

This little Darwinian exercise had purpose. That little lady would have the protection of the strongest male in the pack, ensuring her survival. As times changed, she has had to evolve as well. The macho athletes who make tons of money and have testosterone dripping from their pores have replaced the cavemen. Just ask Major League Baseball's home run-hitting record holder Barry Bonds.

The fact that these guys have women lining up for them can be explained again by Darwin. While most women have moved past needing a man in this manner, this evolutionary decision-making system still lingers in their subconscious. You want proof? Why is it that the nerdy kid in high school who struggled to get a date is now considered a very good catch? He started Microsoft! You don't have to like it, but you will have to admit this stuff still exists. The transition from caveman courtship to high-tech dating involving text messages, e-mails, and online chats have forced our female counterparts to accelerate their courting skills significantly.

Make no mistake, they play to win. Long before you longingly looked at your first underwear model in the Sunday paper, little girls were already talking about their future husbands.

For this reason, dating a younger lady is not such a bad idea. At least this way, you are giving yourself a fighting chance.

So just know that while you are working up the courage to just say “Hello,” she is already four steps ahead of you. She has sent you thousands of signals that all say, “Yes dummy, I think you are pretty hot.” Meanwhile, she is thinking, “I just have to teach you how to dress, act, and roll over.”

So imagine a girl sees you at school and she whispers to her girlfriend, “He’s so cute.” However, she’s talking about the type of “cute” that little girls use to describe the puppies wagging their tails and sniffing their butts at the pet store. Regardless, you managed to catch one of her 999 signals. Congratulations, you’re the man!

Now is the moment of truth. Act quickly and you can make direct contact, “How are you doing?” you ask in your sexy voice. She smiles. If all goes well, you can tell your buddies about your smooth approach. Go ahead we all do it. Just remember, after all the bragging is done, I am still right. She always makes the first move.