



# Sage Wisdom

Listening to advice, whether it's solicited or not, can fuel your personal growth—and perhaps your future.

**E**ighteenth-century English poet, literary critic and philosopher Samuel Taylor Coleridge pondered the concept of “advice” centuries ago, while penning the well-known poem, “Kubla Khan,” and exploring the works of Shakespeare. Perhaps his personal struggle to understand and control his own issues with intermittent depression and chemical dependency caused him to understand that kindness must be an integral ingredient in the formation of successful advice-giving—despite the content of the advice.

Influential to complex thinkers of the 1900’s was American philosopher, physician and psychologist Dr. William James. Dr. James interacted often with the scholars of the day, including Mark Twain, Sigmund Freud and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Among his favorite topics of interest, Dr. James’ work regarding “Pragmatism” was noteworthy. This school of belief centers on the notion that the only real truths are those that can be experienced personally. Although a prevalent and controversial concept of the day, we are now aware that one individual cannot experience everything personally and that knowledge and wisdom gleaned from the insight of others is a highly valuable method of developing self-growth and awareness.

It so happens that the month of April carries several unique “holidays” which offer a potential platform for a planned or spontaneous uttering of advice: April Fool’s Day, Executive Administrators’ Day,

Take Your Daughter to Work Day, National Stress Awareness Day and National Honesty Day. If you are a recipient of unexpected guidance, remember that advice is typically accepted by those who demonstrate an openness of spirit and an interest in personal growth. In that vein, the following personal advice is offered from the wisdom of a sampling of successful Neapolitans:

**REP. KATHLEEN PASSIDOMO, ESQ.,  
FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

“Kathleen, whatever career you choose,” my father suggested, “knowing your personality, make sure it is one where you’re in charge. I can’t see you working for someone else.” Added my mother: “But whatever you do, you always need to give back to your community.”

*“Advice is like snow; the softer it falls, the longer it dwells upon, and the deeper it sinks into the mind.” ~Coleridge*

Heeding my parents’ advice, I went to law school and was in charge of my own law practice for 33 years. Now I am completely disregarding my father’s advice, as I am not only working for “someone else,” I am working for all of the citizens of the State of Florida!

**DAVE SCHIMMEL, MA, LMHC, CEO,  
DAVID LAWRENCE CENTER**

It is not what you accumulate in life that defines you; it is what you choose to give away.

**VICTOR CAROLI, ACTOR/PHOTOGRAPHER**

When I was just a boy my father told me, "If a job is worth doing, it's worth doing well." As trite as that may sound, I have stuck by that maxim in my private and professional lives, and it has served me well in both. Thanks, Dad.

**DEBORAH L. RUSSELL, BOARD-CERTIFIED WILLS,  
TRUSTS AND ESTATES LAWYER, FELLOW AMERICAN  
COLLEGE OF TRUST AND ESTATE COUNSEL**

Judge your actions each day through your own eyes; not by how you think others see you.

**VICKIJO LETCHWORTH, ELDER ABUSE ADVOCATE,  
THE SHELTER FOR ABUSED WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

If there is something stressing you, ask yourself, "Is there anything I can do about this stress within the

next 24 hours?" If the answer is 'yes,' then do it as soon as possible. If the answer is 'no,' then let it go in your mind and look at it again in 24 hours. And if you need to do this every 24 hours, it is okay and a great way to de-stress your daily life.

**STEVEN S. FISHMAN,  
CHAIRMAN/CEO/PRESIDENT, BIG LOTS**

Don't let anyone tell you, you can't! If you have a goal, and want it bad enough, you can achieve it and be successful.

Many inhabitants of our wonderful city are brimming with wisdom and knowledge far beyond what any of us could experience individually. The bountiful offerings of insight and knowledge from a seasoned friend, mentor or colleague is a truly priceless gift and a perfect April present that we can give ourselves! ✿

*Caryn Hacker-Buechel, A.C.S.W., D.C.S.W., began writing books and articles for growing minds during her 30-year career as a psychotherapist and motivational speaker.*