

A Young Man in the 21st Century



Richard Lawrence

Edition 1

Introduction

This book is in three parts –

1. Professor Rodger Lockhart
2. The Life of Johnny Lockhart
3. Thesis: A Young Man in the 21st Century.

After seeking the advice from his grandfather, Professor Rodger Lockhart, young Johnny sets out to put his advice to good use. What follows is a brief account of the life of Johnny Lockhart, a young man growing up in the early part of the 21st Century.

Professor Lockhart was a philosopher and although he lived the best part of his life in the 20th Century, by the early part of the 21st Century, he had already formulated his thesis on the way western society was changing and the future pitfalls that faced a young man in his teens.

At the request of his grandson, Professor Lockhart seeks to impart what he has observed and what he has learned through his own mistakes in life to his grandson. The advice is given along with a copy of the thesis.

This Book is for Charity

This book has been written for charity and if you find it interesting, please consider a small donation to my charity of choice, [‘The Sick Kids Friends Foundation’](#) who support the Royal Hospital for Sick Children (RHSC) in Edinburgh which was the first children's hospital in Scotland. It was built on its present site in Sciennes Road, Edinburgh in 1895 and opened by HRH Princess Beatrice of York, the granddaughter of Queen Victoria.

The current patron is HRH Princess Beatrice of York, granddaughter of Queen Elizabeth II. Every year over 100,000 children pass through the doors of the hospital, ranging in age from just a few hours old to aged 16 in some specialities. The majority of the patients come from Edinburgh, the Lothians and Fife, but the hospital treats children from all over Scotland.

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Professor Lockhart

Professor Rodger Lockhart put another log on the fire and sat back in his chair to continue smoking his pipe. In the background, an old gramophone was playing some classical music. He picked up another photo album and casually flipped through the pages. All those moments came back to him and he would pause on a particular photo and let the memory flood his senses; sometimes he would laugh and sometimes a tear formed in his eye and ran down his cheek.

Outside, it was a cold day in February and Johnny Lockhart walked up the snow-covered path and banged his fist on the front door. There was no bell push, no door knocker, in fact the door itself was in a poor state and hanging on loose hinges. Again, his fist landed on the woodwork and an elderly voice shouted, *"go away, I am not in to hawkers."* Johnny, shouted, *"it's me, Johnny, your grandson."* The voice replied, *"what do you want? Johnny who? Go away!"* Eventually, after a great deal of discussion, the door was slowly opened as the professor finally agreed to admit his grandson. Johnny walked into the hallway and the door was closed behind him. The house was freezing and he could see his breath coming out of his mouth like smoke. He exclaimed, *"the house is cold Gramps, what has happened to your heating?"* The professor replied, *"I like it cold; do you want me to die of a lack of oxygen caused by overheating the house? I just put on extra clothes."*

Johnny was led into the slightly warmer living-room where the classical music was still playing. The professor sat down on his chair, picked up his pipe from an ashtray and fired it back into life with a few puffs. He murmured, *"well Johnny, it has been a long time, what has brought you to my door?"* Johnny sat down on a couch opposite and heated his hands against an open fire. He started, *"I thought, that perhaps, if you thought it okay, that you could give me some advice?"* His grandfather cackled, *"you mean, before I pop my clogs."* Johnny smiled, *"I guess so?"*

The professor made a request, *"how about a cup of tea Johnny? There is a kettle through in the kitchen, the milk and sugar are on the table with the cups and there are some nice biscuits in a red tartan tin."* Johnny, stood up and headed for the kitchen to carry out his grandfather's wishes. A short time later, they both sat back to enjoy their tea and his grandfather asked, *"how is my first wife, your Gran; I have not seen her for 55 years, is she well, still good looking?"* Johnny smiled, because he knew his grandfather and grandmother had been divorced for all that time and had not spoken since, *"oh, she's alright, she has a bad heart valve, she claims to be dying every day. She's lonely, living by herself, but somehow she manages to press on."* The professor tapped his pipe on an ashtray and watched the residue of his tobacco tumble into it; he remarked, *"and how is your dad, that wayward son of mine and your mum; I hardly ever see them these days?"* Johnny murmured, *"dad is always abroad on some trip with his buddies and mum makes do; she spends a lot of time with her female friends; coffee mornings, shopping, you know the sort of things women like*

to do.” The professor commenced to filling his pipe with fresh tobacco and replied, *“aye, life moves on at a fine pace and suddenly we are old and spend our time flicking through photo albums to recapture those glorious moments of our past.”*

“Do you have a lot of regrets Gramps?” Back came the reply, *“Johnny, if you have lived a full life, a life of adventure with its good and bad moments, you are bound to have regrets, it’s part of life and learning from your mistakes. When I was a young man in my teens, I did not give much thought to planning a long-term future, I was too busy enjoying my youth. My father was a simple man and in the nicest of ways, he was not worldly-wise and was unable to advise me on how to avoid the pitfalls. He was content in the simplicity of his life and he died, with few, if any regrets. Had he passed on any advice, I would have listened.”* Johnny replied, *“I have asked my father for advice, but he keeps repeating that I have to make my own way in life and learn through experience.”*

The professor puffed on his pipe and the smoke filled the room with the aroma of ‘St Bruno’ a tobacco he enjoyed smoking. Johnny questioned, *“what is the secret to a good life?”* The professor smiled, *“the secret is contentment through peace of mind, but contentment can be very hard to find, and not only to find it, but to keep it. If there is anything in life that will ruin your peace of mind, it is too much responsibility. Sure, you have to accept responsibility for your job, especially if you enjoy it. However, if you dislike your job, it’s time to find one you like. The greatest mistake that I made, was to build up a list of responsibilities and worse, undertaking responsibilities laid upon me, by other people. And another thing, very few young men realise that when they reach old age, the transgressions they have made during their lifetime can come back to haunt them. It is wise to remember that when starting out in life, a young man should **never** abandon his morality, integrity and virtue to deceit, avarice and decadence.”*

Johnny was quick to reply, *“is that all there is too it?”* The professor puffed his pipe and answered, *“there is not much to life Johnny, it’s just life, and if you read too much into it, you will spend your entire life searching for an answer that does not exist. If you are like me, you will be blessed with reasonable intelligence, common sense and possess a logical mind. With those skills you are off to a good start but recognising one’s limitations is essential. However, your interests in your teens play a great part in achieving peace of mind and contentment in the future.”* The professor picked up the poker and drove it hard into the fire, shuffling the burning embers to the top and the ashes to the bottom. He threw another log on the newly kindled flames and sat back puffing on his pipe. His grandson smiled at his grandfather’s peace of mind, *“what do you mean by my interests play a great part in achieving peace of mind and contentment in the future?”* The professor replied, *“Johnny, you are mechanically minded and you like repairing motor vehicles; so, becoming a motor vehicle mechanic might be worth considering. Unfortunately, many young men forget their interests and take a different road, but with very little long-term contentment. Finding contentment in life can*

prove difficult and for some it is in marriage and children, it may be a love of nature and for others it is their job, sport, leisure activities, holidays, motorbikes, cars, religion, politics and wealth - in fact there are too many to mention. Strangely enough, a good day's hard work, which has been successfully accomplished through discipline and fortitude, can deliver a great deal of contentment and act as a core to which family, leisure activities and hobbies are attached. As I said before, the greatest mistake that any young man can make is thinking that there should be more to life and strives to find it, whereby contentment becomes illusive."

"Gramps, I met a girl and she is fantastic, have you ever been in love, I mean real love? I am thinking of marrying her." His grandfather paused before replying, "I thought I was in love with your grandmother but you must beware of being trapped into a marriage because the sex is good. Remember, great sex can be like a good piece of music, but eventually you can get fed up with it and pick another record from a vast collection. Unfortunately, I was on a hiding to nothing, the sex with your grandmother was terrible and the marriage failed because she got me into debt and I wandered onto other women." My second marriage was better but eventually after many years, she put our son's interests before mine and we parted ways. Finding your female soulmate and living a long and happy contented life together can prove very difficult; often it can happen purely by chance; so, if you figure your girlfriend is the right girl for you, then you must give the relationship a chance. However, remember, she is the daughter of another man who is responsible for her, so do not shack up with her; treat her with respect and her father with respect; you must marry her and assume her father's responsibility."

Just at that moment an email arrived on his computer; there was a loud 'ding' noise and he rose from his chair and walked over to his desk and sat down. *"Excuse me Johnny, I must answer this email, it is from an old friend of mine."* As his grandfather typed his reply, Johnny muttered to himself, *"is there anything he can't do, a commando in the 2nd World War, a photo journalist in war zones during the 1960s to 1990s and a writer of philosophy with a professorship; and now at 95 years of age, a wizard on a computer."* His grandfather finished and returned to his chair at the fireplace. Johnny asked, *"I suppose you are into social media Gramps?"* *"No Johnny, I live a fairly insular life, I have a few friends who are still alive and I meet up with them from time to time; we also correspond by email and text messages. Social media tends to bring out the worst of the human race and is a distortion of real life. There is no better form of human communication than a telephone call, an email and the best of all social interactions, a discussion face to face, usually over a breakfast, a lunch or a nice evening meal. The UK today, is the same as the social restrictions once experienced in Nazi Germany or the Soviet Union; there is too much political correctness and political activism which seeks to disseminate all social interactions and conversation. It has created a more insular society and pockets of friends who tend to keep themselves to themselves. I last experienced this in Poland in 1965 which was then under Soviet rule. Groups of people huddled around tables in bars, kept their*

conversation low and kept themselves to within their own groups. Back then, there were too many individuals quite prepared to report any form of 'wrong speak' especially 'political speak', to the government secret police."

Johnny, seemed somewhat perplexed, *"how do I move forward Gramps, how can I avoid the pitfalls and find that elusive contentment you speak about?"* Professor Lockhart tapped his pipe and began to fill it again with tobacco. He replied, *"Johnny, a man is simply an animal, he sleeps, drinks, eats, copulates to reproduce and like all other animals on the planet he grows old and dies. There is nothing more; most animals are either prey or predator and because of his technology, man is at the top of the food chain. Take away his technology and a lion or a tiger would make short work of him. Man's nemesis, is his intelligence, he thinks too much about living, dying, and very often forgets how to live. Hopefully, his love for humanity and wildlife, combined with a peaceful nature, will ensure he is respected and well thought off by his friends. Unfortunately, he must live alongside those others who have a touch of 'Neanderthal' deoxyribonucleic acid in their blood, and who display an aggressive nature, which often mutates into violence."*

Johnny was quick to reply, *"I see violence on the street every week-end and it seems to be getting worse. I tend to avoid the town centre at night, there are too many knife stabbings and drunk women screaming and shouting; you never see any police."* The professor offered his explanation, *"western society seems to be degenerating, especially in the UK. Centuries ago, thousands of years ago, great philosophers like Moses, Socrates and Jesus, amongst many others, understood the conflict between passive and aggressive human beings and sought to lay down the laws of human morality, either through tradition, criminal law and religion. Of course, even today, there are those who lack a social conscience and any form of morality, who seek to subvert these long-standing traditions. The ten commandments set down by Moses, the stoic advice of Socrates and Marcus Aurelius, the seven deadly sins as laid down in Christian teachings and the parables of Jesus are conveniently set aside by a minority of the human race who embrace avarice, deceit and degenerate behaviour. Surprisingly, the vast majority of the human race who disagree, remain passive and allow the degenerates to control the agenda, even to the extent that they manage to subvert the existing traditions of morality."*

Johnny with a slight frown on his face, *"Gramps, are you not afraid of being seen as just a grumpy old man?"* His grandfather smiled, *"I wish it was that simple Johnny, a grumpy old man is how many would choose to see me, rather than accept they have forsaken the advice of those great philosophers and prophets who lived centuries ago and of the many philosophers who still exist today. I am not asking you to become a 'Born Again Christian' but remember - when starting out in life, a young man should **never** abandon his morality, integrity and virtue to deceit, avarice and decadence."*

His grandfather picked up a manuscript which was lying on a bookshelf, *“this is my thesis Johnny, it is my observations and thoughts of life facing a young man in the 21st Century. I also based it on my own experiences and hopefully it will help you find that elusive contentment, which is all important? This is the only copy; I never had it printed because it was just a means to an end. As is my want, I tend to write down my thoughts rather than let them become lost into the far regions of my mind; old age is unforgiving. I hope you will take the time to read it?”* Johnny took the manuscript from his grandfather and thanked him.

They had another cup of tea, and the professor let Johnny see his photo albums. They sat for a few more hours, looking at the pictures and the professor pointed out the photos of the historical sites he had visited and some of his photo journalist images that he had taken in war zones during the 1960s-1990s. There were lots of laughter, especially at the antics of the family pets, caught by the professor’s camera, and of course the pictures of child baptisms; one of Johnny, a photo he had never seen. He saw pictures of his grandfather’s weddings, his parents wedding and Johnny marvelled at how young everyone looked. There were the sadder moments with the photos of the relatives and friends who had passed away but the professor lifted the sadness to laughter with some of their back stories.

Finally, it was time for Johnny to leave and the professor watched his grandson close the garden gate, wave back and walk away in the snow. The front door was closed and the professor returned to his fire, his pipe, his music and a simple life which now was a microcosm of its former self.

The Life of Johnny Lockhart

It was a grand day, the sun was shining, the summer heat was warm and like all the rest of the graduates that day, Johnny Lockhart threw his mortarboard high in the air and whooped with joy. He had already been provisionally accepted as a Porsche trainee engineer at Zuffenhausen in the city of Stuttgart, the capital of the German state of Baden-Württemberg. There was no language barrier, because he spoke and wrote German fluently. He had always been mechanically minded and after taking the advice from his late grandfather, he had decided to become an automotive engineer. His move to Stuttgart met with the approval of his mother who was happy that he had found a career that suited his interests; his father on learning of his son's move to Porsche in Germany was less enthusiastic and regarded the investment he had spent on his son's education as a waste of money. Johnny was an only son who had been brought up by his mother and he had lived with her in Kensington. He rarely saw his father who was a stockbroker and lived in Edinburgh, Scotland. His parents were not divorced but had lived apart for many years.

Johnny had learned a lot from his grandfather and he was seeking to apply the core of his grandfather's advice in his life plan, *"the secret to living a good life is contentment through peace of mind, but contentment can be very hard to find, and not only to find it, but to keep it. If there is anything in life that will ruin your peace of mind, it is too much responsibility. The greatest mistake that I made, was to build up a list of responsibilities and worse, undertaking responsibilities laid upon me, by other people."* Johnny moved into a rented flat in Stuttgart quite near to his place of work with Porsche. He travelled by taxi to work and when he went out at night to the movies or to a restaurant at the week-end, and to meet friends socially, he also travelled by taxi. He lived a very minimalistic life; he did not purchase material goods and his cleaning lady came in twice a week to clean his home. His luxuries included a smartphone for his email with virtually all the other applications deleted; apart from the photography app as he enjoyed his photography. He had a computer laptop in the flat to further his studies and a brand-new Royal Enfield Continental 650 motorcycle which he kept in a nearby mews garage. It had leather saddle bags for trips into the neighbouring countryside, packed with a flask of coffee, sandwiches and motorbike weatherproof clothing should he be caught out by a heavy downpour.

His university education and his interaction with the students had confirmed that he would never discuss politics and religion and never interpret them into any comment made by another individual. Political correctness and any form of activism or corresponding agenda by another was to be carefully and politely avoided; he was not going to be caught out by speaking the wrong speak. Johnny had long ago decided that social media, especially Facebook and Twitter were not for him. He decided that social communication with his friends and acquaintances in business would be

conducted by telephone, email or face to face; and if a breakfast, lunch or evening meal was part of that face-to-face meeting, so much the better.

Johnny had to make new friends, and he chose them wisely. Many were at his place of work and others he met whilst out with his work mates socially. He sought out the intelligent ones, the more passive ones; those with similar interests such as automotive mechanics, photography, a love of nature and especially those who had a similar interest in 'Film Noir' and reading books. Johnny loved watching the old black and white movies from the 1930s, 40s and 50s. His favourite writers were Ernest Hemingway, Robert L Stevenson, Arthur Conan Doyle and Charles Dickens. Women were in his social group and he treated them with respect, even the ones who often became drunk and sexually permissive; he stayed well clear of them and chose instead to take a different route when it came to sowing his wild oats. One golden rule that he maintained: no person, male or female and including all his friends and acquaintances were ever invited back to his flat; that was his sanctuary.

Johnny sought out the most high-class female escort agency in Stuttgart and employed their services. His escorts were a number of different beautiful women whom he wined, dined and bedded on a regular basis. He always took them to high class hotels with opulent restaurants and afterwards he spent the night with them in one of the rooms of the hotel. The management knew of these arrangements and welcomed the income. Notwithstanding this, Johnny made his friends aware of his sexual preferences, but he made a point of 'never the twain' shall meet. The arrangement worked out well, and the women he met socially, no longer saw him as a potential husband and a meal ticket. Even better, the homosexuals in the company also knew of his sexual preferences. There was the odd occasion when his friends saw him from a distance in the company of one of his female escorts and gasped at her beauty; but they knew better than to introduce themselves and kept their distance.

In the years that followed, Johnny continued to rent his flat which was a modest bolt-hole and he continued to employ a cleaning lady to take care of it. He always ate out, either alone, in the company of his friends or with a beautiful escort lady. He never purchased a car, preferring a taxi and he had an account with one of the local taxi firms. He maintained the upkeep of his Continental motorcycle and employed a valet service to clean and polish it on a regular basis. Johnny regularly attended a local gym where he worked out and maintained a healthy meat, vegetable and fruit diet with plenty of fibre for breakfast with his orange juice. He regularly enjoyed a breakfast at a local café near his place of work. He finished his apprenticeship with Porsche and chose to work as a mechanic at a local Porsche Service Centre. He had decided that he was happy and content working on Porsche cars and even looked forward to the new Porsche electric vehicles that were coming along. He travelled the world on holidays, sometimes alone but very often with friends. He visited many of the historical places he had read about and made sure to take plenty of photographs and

videos. He especially like Egypt, especially the Pyramids at Giza and the Valley of the Kings; he visited them many times.

Johnny always stuck fast to his grandfather's advice. He would never bend and compromise himself by breaking it. He always remembered his grandfather's words, *"and another thing, very few young men realise that when they reach old age, the transgressions they have made during their lifetime can come back to haunt them. It is wise to remember that when starting out in life, a young man should **never** abandon his morality, integrity and virtue to deceit, avarice and decadence."* Johnny never experienced loneliness, he never sought marriage or children. He had long-ago decided that such experiences would bring him no peace of mind, no contentment, no solace or happiness in a western world where society was rapidly changing. He was fortunate that he had escaped the fate of many other men who had experienced the wrath of a woman and the financial impact of a divorce. He was never blamed by children for their failings in life and he never endured the stress of it all. The chances of finding a soul mate, he had left to chance but she never appeared.

Loneliness is a state of mind, you can either become used to it or you can suffer it. Many men who are unhappily married or happily married will find themselves having to deal with loneliness, especially if they live well into old age and their soulmate dies. Children have their own lives to lead and very often an old man becomes an inconvenient responsibility. None of this applied to Johnny, his parents died and with the proceeds of the sale of their houses and their estate, he eventually retired at 65 years of age to a house in the Cotswolds. He employed a cook and a cleaning lady; both were mature women who looked after him for good wages. Very much like T.E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) he continued to ride his motorcycle on English country roads; he enjoyed his picnics, his books and his photography. His friends from Stuttgart would often come to stay for a week-end and he made new friends, carefully chosen at the local golf club, where he was a member, and he enjoyed many a lunch or evening meal in their company.

When he became very old and settled in his nineties, he sat outside on warm days to engage with the wildlife of England. He smoked a pipe filled with 'St Bruno' tobacco, listened to classical music on his gramophone, looked at his photo albums and kept in touch with friends via email on his computer. At his side was his favourite book and one night, he passed away in his bed.

Thesis: A Young Man in the 21st Century

Invariably, a young man in his teens and growing up in the 21st Century, does not give much thought to planning a long-term future, he is too busy enjoying his youth. If he is lucky, he will be blessed with a worldly-wise father who will advise him on how to avoid the pitfalls; and if the young man is wise, he will listen.

Throughout history we have had prophets and philosophers like Homer, Socrates, Jesus, the Prophet Muhammad, and Marcus Aurelius. Each has brought their own philosophy message to the human race. Their core message of how to live a good life and experience a quality and contentment in life can be found in their writings and in various 'adapted' books. Marcus Aurelius, the Roman Emperor 121 AD - 180 AD, wrote his 'Stoic Meditations' of his philosophy in a diary which was intended to be used by himself, but has since been adapted in various books and is now considered one of the bedrocks of Stoicism. If you live long enough and without any form of teaching in philosophy, you may find that many of your final conclusions on how to live a good life will merge with Stoic philosophy.

Achieving contentment through peace of mind can be very hard to find, and not only to find it, but to keep it. If there is anything in life that will ruin your peace of mind, it is too much responsibility. Sure, you have to accept responsibility for your job, especially if you enjoy it. However, if you dislike your job, it's time to find one you like. The greatest mistake that you can make is to build up a list of responsibilities and worse, undertaking responsibilities laid upon you, by other people. Very few young men realise that when they reach old age, the transgressions they have made during their lifetime can come back to haunt them. It is wise to remember that when starting out in life, a young man should **never** abandon his morality, integrity and virtue to deceit, avarice and decadence.

Socrates the famous philosopher was born in Circa 470 BC and he wrote - *"There is only one good, knowledge; and only one evil, ignorance."* On the other hand, I remember the words of Solomon *"for in much wisdom is much vexation, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow, because all his days his task is painful and grievous; even at night his mind does not rest. This too is vanity, unteachable from infancy to tomb, this is the first and main characteristic of mankind. Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income, this too is meaningless."* Solomon was the wisest of men and also the most foolish because for all the wealth that was given to him, his lust for women, his desire for treasure and luxuries brought him happiness and yet unhappiness and disfavour – therein lay the paradox. Remember to respect wealth and never let avarice morph your morality into hubris and decadence. I would go with the Socrates

approach, nobody likes an ignorant man, even if he is happy in his ignorance. The knowledge is out there, all you have to do, is let it in.

Recognising one's limitations is essential. If you are blessed with intelligence, common sense and possess a logical mind, you are off to a good start. However, your interests in your teens play a great part in achieving peace of mind and contentment in the future. If you are mechanically minded and like repairing motor vehicles with your old man, then becoming a motor vehicle mechanic is worth considering. If you like painting and decorating your parents' house, then becoming a painter and decorator is a logical step. If you like motorbikes and the dangers of riding fast, then perhaps racing on a MotoGP race track, like Valentino Rossi, is for you? Unfortunately, many young men forget their interests and take a different road, but with very little long-term contentment. In the worst cases, many squander their abilities; they rebel against authority and refuse to be educated. Not everyone can move through university and into a highly paid profession and these days, even that route is becoming more difficult. It's strange but many university graduates become down and outs, whilst many young men without a university education, reach a decent standard of living, and remain content.

Finding contentment in life can prove difficult and for some the core is in marriage and children, it may be a love of nature and for others it is their job, sport, leisure activities, holidays, motorbikes, cars, religion, politics and wealth - in fact there are too many to mention. Strangely enough, a good day's hard work, which has been successfully accomplished through discipline and fortitude, can deliver a great deal of contentment and act as a core to which family, leisure activities and hobbies are attached. Many philosophers will claim that man is exceptional and stands above all other animals on the planet. This is because he is more intelligent and because he socialises with other human beings, and by doing so, he has developed intelligence and wisdom beyond his natural base instincts. If a man is to be exceptional and above all other animals then he must continually prove his own exceptionalism in relation to nature. He can only achieve this by first recognising that he has a duty to respect all wildlife, flora and fauna but it is a personal duty, he does not have to become a wildlife or environmental activist to demonstrate his commitment. The greatest mistake that any young man can make is thinking that there should be more to life and strives to find it, whereby contentment becomes illusive.

A young man must plan well ahead so that in old age, he has the financial means to support himself. The Great British Empire is well and truly finished and the signs of its final demise into mass poverty for the population are already becoming visible. The UK National Debt of £2.21 trillion (June 2021) is bad enough and unsustainable but the private debt is mind blowing, thanks to cheap loans from money that the UK Government is printing, with no collateral (like gold) behind it. The UK will return to the poverty of the 1930s and it may prove sudden, or it may be drawn out; perhaps another 20 or

even 50 years, but it will happen. The UK State Pension system began in 1908 with the retiral age being 70 years old. It is a giant 'Ponzi Scheme' which relies on the youth paying into it and to pay out to those who are retired. Today, the age of retiral, which for many years has remained at 65 years, is steadily rising and will eventually return to 70 years with a substandard pension. For many retired single people (living alone without any other means) that substandard state pension is already here. A young man will have to plan well ahead and take stock of how he will maintain his quality of life. The UK State Pension (if he ever reaches the age to collect it) will prove to be totally inadequate to support him in his old age.

In the 21st Century, society in the western world is changing and a young man must take that into account. It has become more political in all social circles and thanks to social media and the internet, there are now hundreds if not thousands of activists for virtually every kind of cause and agenda. I have witnessed it all before during my lifetime, but there is very little change in the long-term scheme of things. Today, thanks to the feminists and the woke brigade, it has become especially difficult for a young man who has found himself marginalised; and great efforts have been made by feminists, and other activists, to emasculate him. There is no doubt that wokeism is on the rise whereby a strong young and masculine man is despised by the woke brigade, especially if he is in the public eye, perhaps a celebrity, and worse if he posts his views on social media. So, it is prudent to avoid social media, forums and comments sections in newspapers or articles; in fact, any social interaction over the internet.

Western society is now driven by politically correctness and individuals are ready to condemn each other; so much so, that a young man can lose his job and worse, he may end up in prison for the wrong post or the wrong speak. As my old granny used to say to my mother, *"keep your mouth shut, all your doing is filling their mouths with gossip."* The least said, the sooner mended, so it is wise to avoid discussing religion and politics and to hold your tongue in conversation; give your brain enough time to think and consider what you are about to say. Thanks to the internet and social media - never in the field of human conflict have the few caused so much hardship for the many.

When writing emails, it is prudent to pause and re-read your message, before pressing the send button. If you are angry, save the email as a draft and after you have calmed down, consider if you wish to send it or delete the draft? Human emotions can sometimes prove difficult to control and it is wise to remember, that if you argue with a fool, especially over email or social media, you can end up becoming a fool yourself. Online gambling leads to debt and online games on an Xbox and PS4 games consoles, can lead to depression through games addiction which consumes a normal lifestyle. The last thing you want is to sit at a gaming console all day, wearing an adult nappy.

Man, often considers that he is above all other creatures on the planet but man is simply an animal, he sleeps, drinks, eats, copulates to reproduce and like all other animals on the planet he grows old

and dies. There is nothing more; most animals are either prey or predator and because of his technology, man is at the top of the food chain. Take away his technology and a lion or a tiger would make short work of him. Man's nemesis, is his intelligence, he thinks too much about living, dying, and very often forgets how to live. Hopefully, his love for humanity and wildlife, combined with a peaceful nature, will ensure he is respected and well thought off by his friends. Unfortunately, he must live alongside those others who have a touch of 'Neanderthal' deoxyribonucleic acid in their blood, and who display an aggressive nature, which often mutates into violence.

Violence within the human race is visible every day, it can be seen on the streets, in every major city, in domestic disturbances and in wars. There is no doubt that western society seems to be degenerating. Centuries ago, thousands of years ago, great philosophers like Moses, Socrates and Jesus, amongst many others, understood the conflict between passive and aggressive human beings and sought to lay down the laws of human morality, through tradition, criminal law and religion. Of course, even today, there are those who lack a social conscience and any form of morality, who seek to subvert these long-standing traditions. The ten commandments set down by Moses, the stoic advice of Socrates and Marcus Aurelius, the seven deadly sins as laid down in Christian teachings and the parables of Jesus are conveniently set aside by a minority of the human race who embrace avarice, deceit and degenerate behaviour. Surprisingly, the vast majority of the human race who disagree, remain passive and allow the degenerates to control the agenda, even to the extent that they manage to subvert the existing traditions of morality.

Finding your female soulmate and living a long and happy contented life together can prove very difficult; often it can happen purely by chance. These days, the young male is faced with new challenges, especially if he is regarded as a male chauvinist by the female sex, especially the feminists; but the days of sowing your wild oats are not over as many young women in the 21st Century are sexually promiscuous. Thanks to the contraceptive pill or an easy abortion (if an unborn child is an inconvenience) and all thanks to the relaxing of morality in society, women can now enjoy sex without any social inhibitions or the threat of being classed as a 'whore'. They can have their children out of wedlock to a man, several men and there is no fear of them being classed as mentally unstable; a common labelling in the early 20th Century.

However, a young man must still respect women, even if they do not respect themselves; and despite the onslaught of the feminists who would have him branded a misogynist. There is nothing more annoying for feminists than if they see you opening a door for a woman, pulling out a chair for her to sit on at a restaurant table and paying for the meal. Feminists go stir crazy if they see you take your woman into a store and buy her a beautiful set of clothes and spoil her with jewellery. The feminists will become apoplectic (especially the fat single ones) if she is your wife, who wishes to stay at home, look after the kids and run them to school in her new car; meet her girlfriends for

coffee, lunch and shopping; perhaps pushing their prams together with giggling babies and is a 'cordon bleu' cook who loves to cook barefoot in the kitchen.

Respect for a woman is paramount, especially one you have just met, and more so, if she has become drunk through consuming alcohol whilst in your company in a restaurant. Even if she wants intercourse, it is best not to go there, because at a later stage when she has sobered up, you could face a charge of rape. Also, when in a hot sexual embrace with a woman you have just met, forget about making a pass because it will probably end with you in jail for a sexual assault. These days, only a fool will invite a woman (especially one he has just met) back to his flat or agree to visit hers. Relationships take time to mature and it is wise to give them time. Be careful about embarking on any sexual activity with her, even if she invites it. The first lesson for any young man who is astride a female locked in the passion of sex – when she whispers, *"I love you, do you love me?"* or *"I want to have your baby."* – withdraw and run; run very fast. Otherwise, that sexual liaison, perhaps only a dalliance of a few months, might turn into a forced lifetime of strife.

Also, 'shacking up' is to be avoided, and if you think it is a great idea, you are thoughtless. Think: I have a great job, my own flat and a mature female housekeeper to keep it clean. You can have a new car or a motorbike when you want one, plenty of spare cash to spend on entertaining women, holidays, booking hotels, private pensions, purchasing property and saving for old age. If you figure your girlfriend is the right girl for you, then remember, she is the daughter of another man who is responsible for her; treat her with respect and her father with respect. If she agrees to the marriage, you must request her hand in marriage from her father, marry her and assume her father's responsibility.

A woman is like a flower, she requires a lot of love and attention. For thousands of years men have been bringing presents to their mates and in marriage it pays for a man to remember that his children will eventually grow up and flee the nest. He will be left with his wife in the house and if discontent has been allowed to fester, the final years of the marriage could prove unpleasant. The love bond between husband and wife must be maintained all the way through the relationship (by both sides) and one must bite one's tongue, lest love and caring disintegrates. The courtship of a woman by a man is for life; wining and dining, buying her clothes, the movies, the theatre, holidays, presents and sharing interests cannot promise any guarantees but go a long way in keeping the bond between husband and wife alive, especially after the children leave.

The world, especially in the west, is brimming with single and divorced women as well as young and older widows with most screaming out for companionship and hopefully for some, it includes sex. I could argue that they brought it on themselves, I am not going to argue, they did. It's a crazy world of women and their contradictions; feminists, women baring all in reality TV shows, soft porn celebrity singers, strippers, prostitutes and those female models who like to stretch half naked over

motorcycles and cars in adverts. Then there are women who love to display their naked assets in men's magazines and in porn videos. Of course, there are thousands, probably millions of ordinary women, the silent ones, living ordinary lives, like the girl next door. A young man has to weave his way through it all and finding a soul mate can prove difficult.

Women are now into everything to do with men. They are in his workplace, his leisure time, private club, sports, the pub, the military, the emergency services and men get the blame for sexualising them, a no-win situation. Put a mare into a field of stallions and watch them go crazy; you get the picture. Imagine what happens when you put half a dozen women amongst a thousand men on a ship? All the laws are not going to change human nature and unfortunately if a young male says the wrong words, he will be held to account, even many years later.

There is no question that some young men will choose to take a different road in relation to women, forsaking the normal casual sexual liaisons, partnerships and marriage. If you are single and well heeled, there are always professional escort women that get monthly medical checks through their agencies. Imagine walking into a hotel restaurant with a beautiful escort on your arm and after the meal you retire to a hotel room. There are no ongoing responsibilities and there are numerous females at the escort agency to vary your choice.

Then there is the LGBTQ+ brigade and I have given up trying to figure out what all the letters stand for. All I know is they make a grand parade mincing down the street, all half naked; some are fat, some plug ugly and some kissing their own gender; and most times you don't know what their true gender is. However, there are no proud heterosexual parades, the average heterosexual is too proud for such displays and the idea of marching half naked down the street with colourful banners is laughable, *"I am a proud heterosexual man."* Can you imagine Clint Eastwood wearing only swimming trunks and carrying a banner with those words, leading the parade – I don't think so.

The last thing you want to do is join the woke brigade and become a man that is always virtue signalling your weaknesses. Ernest Hemingway, Clark Gable and Theodore Roosevelt, amongst many other men, would have a hard time in a 21st Century woke society, but then again, perhaps not? I suspect they would rebel to counter the woke brigade in their breeding grounds. Wokeism is movement spawned by neoliberals that wanted to stop racism and social injustice. It has now morphed into a cult that seeks to silence all of those who disagree with their narrative.

Learn from the mistakes of others, especially those who have been figureheads in history. Ernest Hemingway was a brilliant writer, a journalist and a war correspondent; in fact, one of a few war correspondents who actually picked up a weapon and used it on the battlefield in World War II. His character became deeply flawed due to many head injuries (some during plane crashes and war battles) plus failed marriages, alcoholism and an inner desire for positive acknowledgement in his

writings and personal life. However, his inner 'alcohol free' character was that of a kind, considerate man who displayed a great humanity. Perhaps his greatest failing was bragging about his exploits, even to the extent that he embellished them. Later in life and after his death, his enemies used his own words to belittle him. So, remember - *"in public avoid talking often and excessively about your accomplishments and dangers, for however much you enjoy recounting your dangers, it's not pleasant for others to hear about your affairs."* – Epictetus. There is no doubt that Hemingway finally lost his ability to write and after many attempts in clinics to cure his depression, he picked up a loaded shotgun and committed suicide.

Marriage is perhaps the greatest burden for a young man and it can place on him enormous responsibilities with very little long-term contentment. Amongst the many challenges for any young man who is starting out in life, is to recognise, that he must live within his physical, mental and financial limitations. Beware of cheap loans, especially those mortgage loans which encourage the inflation of property values. If there is a financial crash and/or a rise in interest rates whereby borrowers are unable to keep up the interest payments, their properties will be repossessed by the banks and the building societies. At present (2021) interest rates have been deliberately kept low by the UK Government to avoid a financial collapse of the UK but this cannot be maintained in the long-term and interest rates will eventually rise.

When purchasing property, it is best to save a sizeable deposit and obtain a sensible basic loan that is paid back monthly (capital borrowed + interest) in full over 25 years. If the interest rates rise, the bank will usually offer you the option to extend the length of the loan at the same interest rate or you can increase your interest payment and maintain the original 'period of time' agreement. Never fall into the trap of extending the time period of the loan. Also, if the interest rates fall, keep the same monthly interest payment as it will reduce the '25-year timescale' of the loan. Remember, never take onboard more responsibilities; it may seem sensible to purchase a worn down or old property that requires renovation or ongoing maintenance but all you are taking on, is the hidden financial impact and the hassle factor of dealing with builders which usually brings on stress. Purchasing a brand new flat or house, sold by the builder, makes a great deal of sense – you move in and get on with your life with much less hassle.

The wrongs steps taken in youth such as marrying too young and running up debt to purchase material goods and/or a house should be seriously considered because in the long run, they can bring on depression, alcoholism, prescription drugs, even illegal drugs to avoid depression, to blank out the pain of regret, and eventually, even suicide. I have attended at the scenes of many suicides and nearly in all cases it is a man or a woman who have endured a broken marriage. Of course, there are successful marriages, loving soul mates who remain married until death; never a cross word between them and who have raised fine kids. The trick, is finding your soul mate and taking that step

with a woman. The wrong step and the marriage might fail in a month, a year, 10 years and in many cases 20 years or more. The real hard part is living after divorce, knowing that you still love her but you know in your heart that it can never work out; you have to live with that, a form of everlasting grief.

Every man knows or should know that a strong woman becomes the foundation for her man and any offspring. A strong woman can make or break a man but that does not mean he has to become a wimp and bow to her every command. Women by their very nature are usually submissive to a man in a relationship, however they will use guile to attempt to change him into their way of thinking whilst forgetting that a man, who was once a boy, was brought up by another woman who may have had different ways in handling his nature. A married man is a bit like a dog; confused by a new owner that does not understand his ways.

In a marriage, a young man has to start as he means to go on with a woman and he does not have to put her over his knee and spank her bottom to get his message over, although some women apparently like it. It's about establishing the limits of a relationship and certainly in the very early stages, before a marriage. A woman, whether she likes it or not, is no different to any female animal; the desire to nest and have offspring is inbuilt into her instincts. Sure, some will fight against those instincts and successfully remain childless spinsters for all their lives and sadly, for many, because they were too ugly to attract a mate.

Beware of being trapped in marriage because the sex is good. Remember, great sex can be like a good piece of music, but eventually you can get fed up with it and pick another record from a vast collection. The majority of marriages in the 21st Century seldom last which is due to the way society has degenerated. The costs are horrendous: a house for her to nest in, kids, education, a car for her, and you will be expected to clean, change nappies, help in the school run and the bank of dad pays for everything. Divorce is very likely because in the long run, other women will regard you as prey and open their legs for you. Pardon the pun but you could become sucked into a relationship from which there is no escape; the mistress becomes a threat to your marriage. Divorce is a messy affair, spiralling legal costs and the half your pension and assets handed over to your ex-wife. The ride has been an expensive one and the kids still come back on you for their education costs. Perhaps the greatest pain is that your children pick sides and even chastise you in later life and blame you for their own failings. Sometimes, when they have experienced more of life, they apologise; but it is never the same.

There are a multitude of men who for some unfathomable reason must have a woman around the house, either a common-law partner or a wife. It's like they cannot bear to live alone and many of them marry many times; some of their marriages only last a few months. On top of those decisions, some men even take on a woman who already has a number of kids to another man and sometimes

different men. If you feel that you cannot live alone, get a dog, it's a lot cheaper; it is less of a hassle and offers less responsibility. Never forget that the more responsibilities you take onboard, the harder it becomes to find true contentment in your life.

Many men leave a number of 'burning bridges' behind. Those friends at primary school, those in secondary school and university, even your relatives. Those guys you left behind at your last place of work; the list goes on. The bonds become broken because you have moved away or you have fallen out. Even the hectic pace of living has blocked the road to their door. Your character has a lot to do with it and also your lack of tolerance for your friends' faults – we all have faults. Put it this way, you can maintain a friendship and tolerate your friend's faults and even his politics and religion (if they are different to yours) but when his lifestyle begins to impact on yours, or your family or other friends - that is the time to walk away. It is advisable, to never go into a business partnership with anyone, especially a close friend or a family member; it can lead to discontent and a breakup of the relationship.

Heed the words of the philosophers –

- *“The key is to keep company only with people who uplift you and whose presence calls forth your best.”* – Epictetus.
- *“People are like dirt. They can either nourish you and help you grow as a person or they can stunt your growth and make you wilt and die.”* – Plato.
- *“Misfortune shows those who are not really friends.”* – Aristotle

When it comes to your male friends, never become distracted by your girlfriend, partner or wife and abandon those long held friendships. Never, never, take her along to your male social gatherings, always keep her apart from your mates. Some women are strange creatures, they see mates as a threat to their relationship with you, *“so you are going out with the rat pack again, getting drunk and having a good time”* whilst forgetting that she sees her own pals for coffee mornings, lunches and the 'all important' shopping for clothes. Of course, women see the real threat and they know it only too well, but refuse to admit it - another woman in a pub might hunt her man down and spread her legs for him; and strange though it may seem, a wedding ring on his finger makes him more attractive.

Maintaining your health is all important, what you consume, breathe and expose your body to, can determine whether you have a strong defensive immune system or a weak one, leading you to become susceptible to illness, especially the common cold, flu and other coronaviruses during the winter period. In many cases, your genetics play an important part in your longevity and can be passed on from generation to generation. There are thousands, perhaps millions of cases where people who have smoked cigarettes and consumed alcohol all their lives, live well into old age.

However, many at a young age, who smoke and drink, have passed away through pneumonia, blood clots, amputations of legs, strokes, heart attacks, pancreatic cancer and lung cancer. Sadly, I have had to deal with youngsters who have choked on their own vomit in their sleep, caused by excessive alcohol consumption. There is no doubt that smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol can prove very addictive and yet offer enjoyment, especially in social circles. In the end, when you sum it up, longevity in such cases, is a bit of a lottery.

Other highly addictive route which can impact on your health is an illegal Class A drug. I have seen the end results of individuals smoking cannabis; it invariably graduates to cocaine and heroin abuse – the end result (prior to death) is not pretty. Of those (I knew) who smoked cannabis in their late teens, the majority were dead in their thirties as a direct result of heroin abuse. Legal prescription drugs such as opioids to reduce pain are also highly addictive. Many opioids contain the active ingredients dihydrocodeine and paracetamol but once you commence a course of these pain killers, it can prove extremely difficult to wean yourself off them. The prescribed four pills per day can double as your bodies tolerance to them increases and their ability to reduce the pain decreases. Pain can develop through injury, worn hip/knee joints, arthritis and life-threatening illnesses, such as cancer. The most common pain is back pain which is usually caused by a lack of exercise or obesity which places a strain on the individual's back to sustain the weight. Another common cause of backpain is sitting on a chair all day at work and inputting data into a computer or at home, playing computer games or internet browsing.

In very old age, a common cause of backpain is sitting all day, in a hot room, watching the television. Your old body is incapable of coping with normal room temperatures – you feel cold. In my youth, the old folk tended to wear outdoor clothes in the house rather than overheat it. Even in bed at night, they would wear layers of bed clothes rather than overheat the bedroom. In any event, your old tired body seeks to rest but your mind knows that you should stay active and get out and about in the fresh air. Sitting or sleeping in an overheated house can lead to edema in various parts of the body through a lack of oxygen in the blood system, and very often, incontinence. The end result is usually pneumonia or a stroke, kidney failure or heart failure, followed by death. To add grist to the mill, nature knows that if you are very old and go outdoors in the cold air, you can catch pneumonia, which invariable causes a swift death. Therefore, getting out and about in the fresh air is crucial whilst remaining on your guard regarding the weather conditions.

Can a man, who is old and living on his own have a great time, especially when he is past his sexual prime – of course he can. He still has the flat, probably a penthouse flat, the new mobility car or scooter and plenty of money, because keeping a woman comes with high maintenance costs, but he has avoided that and there are no 'grown up' kids begging at the door. He has his mates, his old female lovers to wine and dine and of course a mature female housekeeper to keep his flat clean,

“that’s the flat all tidy again sweetie.” “Thanks Meg, I won’t see you for a week or two as I am off in my wheelchair to Rio, an old flame is coming on holiday with me, she has promised to pick me up and push me out to the taxi.”

There will come a time in old age, when you will look back on your life and come to realise that the years have passed quickly. Quintus Horatius Flaccus lived during the 1st Century BC and he was the leading Roman Poet in that time. In his 1.1 Book of Odes he features the Latin aphorism, ‘Carpe Diem’ – translated as ‘Pluck the Day as it is Ripe’ or in later translations ‘Seize the Day’.

Horace wrote in Latin and this is my ‘very loose’ translation from his 1.1 Book of Odes –

Do not ask how long you will live for it is forbidden knowledge.

Do not scan the books of your religion, there is no answer.

It is better to face the future like you faced the past.

Whether your God has many winters yet to give, or this is your last; stand firm against the forces of adversity.

Clear your mind and improve your wisdom, life is short, why should you expect more?

In the moment of your passing, will you recognise and be saddened that time has slipped away?

Live each moment like it was your last - Carpe Diem (seize the day)

When a man dies, he may fall into a deathly sleep without dreams. He will be unaware that he is dead and it will last for all eternity. However, he may transcend to another place and find new horizons to explore and even meet old friends – in either case, he will not be disappointed.