

Commitment

1 There's a difference between interest and commitment. When you're interested in doing something, you do it only when it's convenient. When you're committed to something, you accept no excuses; only results. **Kenneth Blanchard**

2 There are three kinds of yeses. There's commitment, confirmation, and counterfeit. People are most used to giving the counterfeit yes because they've been trapped by the confirmation yes so many times. So the way you master no is understanding what really happens when somebody says 'no.' When yes is commitment, no is protection. **Christopher Voss**

3 Where there is no human connection, there is no compassion. Without compassion, then community, commitment, loving-kindness, human understanding, and peace all shrivel. Individuals become isolated, the isolated turn cruel, and the tragic hovers in the forms of domestic and civil violence. Art and literature are antidotes to that. **Susan Vreeland**

4 Commitment means that it is possible for a man to yield the nerve center of his consent to a purpose or cause, a movement or an ideal, which may be more important to him than whether he lives or dies. **Howard Thurman**

5 In addition to the traditional concept of true commitment that means you are willing to die for what you think is right, make equal space for the womanly concept of commitment that means you are willing to live for what you believe. **June Jordan**

6 The relationship between commitment and doubt is by no means an antagonistic one. Commitment is healthiest when it's not without doubt but in spite of doubt. **Rollo May**

7 Too many Christians have a commitment of convenience. They'll stay faithful as long as it's safe and doesn't involve risk, rejection, or criticism. Instead of standing alone in the face of challenge or temptation, they check to see which way their friends are going. **Charles Stanley**

8 If you deny yourself commitment, what can you do with your life? **Harvey Fierstein**

9 Love gladly accepts responsibility. Love wants commitment. **Jeanette Winterson**

10 In continuous practice, under a succession of agreeable and disagreeable situations, you will realize the marrow of Zen and acquire its true strength. **Shunryu Suzuki**

11 People want peace, but not the things that make for peace. **Dorothy Day**

12 Great dreams contain inexhaustible truths, and orient us, like runes, toward our futures. One hesitates to try to explain them; one wants to dance them, act them out in living gestures. The more we put ourselves into a great dream, the more we get back. Great dreams are wells that never run dry. **Michael Grosso**

13 If you are traveling the road of your dreams, be committed to it. Do not leave an open door to be used as an excuse such as, 'Well, this isn't exactly what I wanted.' Therein are contained the seeds of defeat. Walk your path. Even if your steps have to be uncertain, even if you know that you could be doing it better. If you accept your possibilities in the present, there is no doubt that you will improve in the future. But if you deny that you have limitations, you will never be rid of them. Confront your path with courage, and don't be afraid of the criticism of others. And, above all, don't allow yourself to become paralyzed by self-criticism. God will be with you on your sleepless nights, and will dry your tears with His love. God is for the valiant. **Paulo Coehlo**

14 I think we have to ask ourselves ... the narrators, the storytellers, the journalists: Are we ringing the alarm in the right way? Are we doing our jobs to try to uphold our democracy?"

We, as Americans, are going to be severely tested in the next year or two to decide, what are we willing to sacrifice to be the country that we believe that we are? And whose rights do we hold as fundamental in this country? And are all Americans worthy of having those same rights? I don't think we know the answer to that. But I think what is important for us to know is we decide. **Nicole Hannah-Jones**

15 What Happens

It has happened
and it happens now as before
and will continue to happen
if nothing is done against it.

The innocent don't know a thing about it
because they are too innocent
and the guilty don't know a thing about it
because they're too guilty.

The poor don't take notice
because they're too poor
and the rich don't take notice
because they're too rich.

The stupid shrug their shoulders
because they're too stupid
and the clever shrug their shoulders

because they're too clever.

It doesn't bother the young
because they're too young
and it doesn't both the old
because they're too old.

That's why nothing is done against it
and that's why it happened
and happens now as before
and will continue to happen.

–Erich Fried, translated from German

For Reflection and Discussion

A Is commitment a theme that calls to you?

B Have you faced difficult decisions around whether to commit or what commitment requires?

C Can your commitments be seen in the way you live your life—at home, at work, in your spiritual practices?

D Has the pandemic caused you to reassess some of your commitments?

E Does your engagement with All Souls have an impact on your commitments? Is commitment an issue in your relationship to All Souls? How does that play out?

–Mary Beth Hatem, for the use of covenant groups at All Souls Church, Unitarian