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Get your life together quotes

Photo by Max Felner on UnsplashI'm sitting at the airport in Oregon, on my way home to Pennsylvania. I've been visiting my daughter for her birthday and sucking the last bit of summer out of August.Because if there's one thing that's absolutely certain in life, it's this. Summer ends. It always ends. That's been more obvious to me this year than ever, because for the first time my life, I don't live in the desert.I know that fall in Pennsylvania will be brilliant — an world-renowned explosion of colorful leaves. And then the lake effect will set in and it will be gray and the sun won't come out again until May.This is the time of year when bloggers everywhere are getting all giddy about cozy socks and pumpkin spice, but if I had my way I'd spend my life in the sun and warmth and lush full bloom of eternal summer.Fall does have one thing going for it, though. It's a fantastic time to reset. To think about life and to reboot.I was going to say if a reboot is necessary, but I'll turn forty-eight in October and in forty-eight Octobers, I've never once come up against one where a reboot wasn't on the agenda.September is when things start. School. A new season. The holidays. And it's a good time to take stock and see if you need to get your life together.Here are some quotes that might give you a little boost.Tell me, what is it you plan to dowith your one wild and precious life? — Mary OliverThis is a line from Mary Oliver's poem Summer Day. It's a platitude, of course. A little cliché. Too Pinterest-ready. But it still tugs at me. My mom died young, when she was only about a year older than I am now.I have it on my mind a lot lately that when my mother was the age I am now, she was finding out that she had a tumor in her breast. That her cancer had already spread to other parts of her body.I was 24 when she died. She was 48. I've thought about this line from Mary Oliver a lot. It helps me to focus my intentions.We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths. — Walt DisneyThis quote is part of the end credits for my favorite Disney movie, Meet the Robinsons. It never fails to make my breath catch. Curiosity is one of a handful of traits that I work hard on keeping fresh and alive inside myself.If you think about it, a healthy dose of FOMO keeps you stretching. Too much, maybe isn't great. It can keep you from enjoying where you are in the moment. But a weak or lacking sense of curiosity is as dangerous.Some day you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again. — C.S. LewisC.S. Lewis wrote the books that are among the first to have ignited my imagination. I love this quote — because I love the idea of aging bringing me back to a time when books were as magical as The Chronicles of Narnia were the first time I read them.I have every intention of being an eccentric, magical old woman some day.Why do you go away? So that you can come back. So that you can see the place you came from with new eyes and extra colors. And the people there see you differently, too. Coming back to where you started is not the same as never leaving. — Terry PratchettI'm in Oregon right now, visiting my daughter and it's reminding me of how much I miss the West. I miss the feeling of being home. I'm confident I'll have that feeling again, even if I don't move back to Nevada anytime soon. But I've had a rough time adjusting.As homesick as I am, I've also had a hard time actually thinking about turning around and going back to Reno. The reason we left is still there — it's gotten too expensive to live there — but even beyond that. Thinking about going back feels a little like giving up and I don't like that feeling.This quote helps me to remember that there is no going backward. Even if I wind up in Reno again, I'll get there by moving forward.Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Wishing is not enough; we must do. — Johann Wolfgang Von GoetheThis. I am constantly reminding myself of this.It's not enough to be educated. Or to think a lot about things. Or to want really hard. I have to actually implement the things I learn and act on the things I want.Our brains are constantly trying to protect us from disappointment and rejection. So research and planning to write end up feeling like writing. But they aren't. Action in the right direction matters a lot.Security is mostly a superstition. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing. — Helen KellerHelen Keller has been one of my hero's since I was a Girl Scout. Because of her extraordinary gumption and her singular example of finding a way under extraordinary circumstances.But also because she was such a rebel. She fought for fairness and freedom and feminism. This quote is like a siren call to rebellion. It's so easy to settle into the illusion of security.You Don't Have To Be Great To Start, But You Have To Start To Be Great. — Zig ZiglarAnother platitude, I guess. But sometimes clichés are cliché because they are so basically true. This is one of them. No one ever has a guarantee of success. Ever. Even sure bets sometimes flop. But you can be sure that if you don't actually try, you will one hundred percent not do whatever it is you want to do.I think about it sometimes like a road trip. You can sit at your kitchen table and plan the crap out of one. Every stop along the way, every sight you want to see. But if you don't ever leave your kitchen, you don't ever actually take the trip.Same goes with that business you've dreaming about or that book you've got all plotted out. Planning isn't enough. You must start.The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity. The fears are paper tigers. You can do anything you decide to do. You can act to change and control your life; and the procedure, the process is its own reward. — Amelia EarhartI love the idea of fear as a collection of paper tigers. They look scarier than they usually are. There's this scene in the movie We Bought a Zoo where Matt Damon's character advises his son to just commit to ten seconds of courage. That's all it takes to get over the initial fear of doing something scary.Ten seconds of courage. I think Amelia Earhart would agree. I also love this quote because it reminds me of the motto I learned when I was a student at Goddard College: Trust the process. It's one of those things that's hard to wrap your head around, but you know it when you're doing it. Trust that the work will result in something good, even if you don't know what that will be right now. Even if it's not what you think you want at the beginning.Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. — Francis of AssisiI have an iffy, kind of heart-breaking relationship with Christianity. I want to have faith. I want to find comfort in the things my parents and grandparents believed in. But I struggle so hard with it.But I do love this quote. I guess it's a little prayer. I may not ever resolve my feelings about Christianity, but I keep this prayer in my heart anyway. For whoever might be listening. Or just for myself.There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it. — Edith WhartonI think this is a little like the Francis of Assisi prayer. Let me be the candle that shines a light, or the mirror that reflects the light from someone else's candle. Both are important.Always remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else. — Margaret MeadI love this one — it's so droll.We're all snowflakes, common in our uniqueness. A long time ago I took part in a six-month long program for parents of kids with special needs. The person leading the program told us that our kids were not oranges to the average kid's apple.They're all apples, she said. More alike than different. One might be more tart. Another more sweet. One is red. One is green. But apples are apples, even if each one is completely unique from all the others.And that's all people. More alike than different. But still —each one utterly different.Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud. — Maya AngelouLet's end with Maya Angelou and this simple direction.Everyone is grieving. Everyone is hurting. Everyone has some pain that they keep hidden away. It's shocking how just a small amount of basic human kindness — even just the act of noticing another human being — can make all the difference.Sometimes all it takes to be the rainbow in someone's cloud is to pay attention.I think about this sometimes, when something's happening in the world that is so hard to look at, it would be easier to just turn off the news and pretend it's not happening. Sometimes it feels like I have so little power. So little control. But the one thing I can do is watch. And pay attention. And notice. Be a witness.I think, sometimes, that's enough.Let's end things with Anne Shirley and make it a baker's dozen. When I start to feel sad about summer ending, I imagine L.M. Montgomery, looking out of her window and thinking to herself: "I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers."As much as I love summer and as tough as it is for me when things turn cold, I am so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers. Because October is beautiful, even if it isn't summer. Because I wouldn't miss the Pennsylvania fall for anything.Because there is no better time than fall for getting your life together.And my life needs to be gotten together on the regular.

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