

President Gerald R. Ford's handwritten reflections, 1977 or 1978

Scanned from the collection **Gerald R. Ford: Materials from the writing of *A Time To Heal*** at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library

While writing his autobiography, *A Time to Heal* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), President Gerald R. Ford composed a series of personal reflections on twenty-seven topics. What makes these documents so unusual is not only their introspection but also their form. President Ford recorded these observations by hand, writing in blue ball point on his favored yellow writing tablets. He did not expend time and energy to polish and edit his writing, apparently planning to do so when incorporating them into the book. Therefore occasional spelling or grammatical errors or incomplete thoughts appear.

For each reflection the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library has scanned President Ford's handwritten document and added a Library-produced transcription below to aid in reading the reflection.

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Advice to a Young Man going off on his own.

Look upon "going off on your own" as a new challenge with optimism & opportunity. The right mental attitude is crucial. You must believe in yourself and you must have conviction that "out there" there is a "pot of gold" at the end of the rainbow. It matters not that our goals are different. Inevitably they cover the spectrum of life.

You must recognize along the path of life there will be disappointments and the best way to avoid another is to plan better & work harder. Remember - the harder you work the luckier you are.

You must set a goal realizing that it will be different for each individual. Satisfaction & happiness are the best targets. For one the target is material wealth. For another it means public recognition. To another it is achieved by unlocking the mysteries of science. Others might prefer a quiet, routine life.

Whatever your objective get up everyday pledging to yourself I am going to make progress and remember one fundamental - one must learn to walk before trying to run.

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