



## 101 Things I Want to Say...The Collection

**Douglas J. Wood**

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*In this heartfelt, charming book, a father conveys his philosophy of life to his three children.*

Douglas J. Wood did what many parents probably wish they had done when their children reached a milestone: committed his advice to writing. An attorney and author of two previous books, Wood took the time to write down 101 things he wanted each of his three children to know. Reading the volume is a bit like eavesdropping on intimate conversations between a father and his children, but Wood's counsel—steeped in sincerity, laced with good-hearted humor, and laden with love—not only makes for enjoyable reading, but it also holds universal truths to which most parents can relate.

Wood offered his advice to Meghan when she started college, to Joshua upon his graduation from college, and to Andrea when she began a career. Obviously, *101 Things I Want to Say...The Collection* is a very personal work. Wood presents all 101 messages he wrote for his son and two daughters—303 entries in all.

For Meghan, Wood's first piece of advice is, simply, "Boys are pigs." This refrain recurs in a variety of humorous forms throughout the initial section of the book. Clearly, Wood enjoys teasing his daughter, but there is a dose of well-placed concern woven into his words. Other snippets are more serious: "Never regard your freedom as a privilege because you were lucky enough to be born here. Freedom is a right—a right for everyone. Pure and simple."

Wood's advice to Joshua is equally endearing but focuses on his son's graduation from college. Wood writes, for instance, "Relax and take a deep breath. You've earned it. And remember that there's no need to rush to your next place, wherever that may be." Wood is to be admired for showing his warmth and vulnerability to his son. One entry is simply the statement, "Men do cry." In another entry, Wood admits, "Every day, I am fearful that I will lose the love of those I care about and the business of those I serve. But loss will never happen. Why? Because I fear every day that it will."

For Andrea, Wood departs from his standard format for one third of this section, instead offering definitions of certain words, coupled with commentary about them. For example: "Leadership. Leadership is rarely something that gets a thank-you, so don't expect it. But don't shy from being a leader or be upset when you don't get recognition. Remember that being a leader sure beats the view from behind."

It is apparent that Wood put a great deal of thought into what he wanted to convey to each of his children. His writing is clear, concise, and conversational. The book is also well designed: each of the 303 entries, set in large type, occupies a single page. The cover features a photo of a diverging path, which the author notes is an homage to Robert Frost's poem, "The Road Not Taken."

*101 Things I Want to Say...The Collection* demonstrates one man's rare ability to communicate his philosophy of life to his children in succinct bits and pieces, each with its own unique message. Sometimes, Wood's tidbits will elicit a smile; sometimes, they may even evoke a tear. Whether they laugh or cry, many parents will cherish Douglas J.

Wood's delightful book.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (August 11, 2014)

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