

## To Risk

To laugh is to risk appearing a fool,  
To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.  
To reach out to another is to risk involvement,  
To expose feelings is to risk exposing your true self.  
To place your ideas and dreams before a crowd is to risk their loss.  
To love is to risk not being loved in return,  
To live is to risk dying,  
To hope is to risk despair,  
To try is to risk failure.  
But risks must be taken because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing.  
The person who risks nothing, does nothing, has nothing, is nothing.  
He may avoid suffering and sorrow,  
But he cannot learn, feel, change, grow or live.  
Chained by his servitude he is a slave who has forfeited all freedom.  
Only a person who risks is free.  
The pessimist complains about the wind;  
The optimist expects it to change;  
And the realist adjusts the sails.

William Arthur Ward