

# *Papa's Rules for Life*

A grandfather's  
desire to share  
words of wisdom  
with his  
grandson

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## **Try to be observant of all that is happening around you** | *Why?*

First and foremost, for your own personal safety. Second, the smallest details in life often turn out to be the most significant and life-changing, both for you and for others. Size does not determine importance.

## **Remember a wise person is one who listens more than they speak** | *Why?*

When you listen more than you speak, you will be perceived as an interested, trustworthy person. Try to offer constructive thoughts throughout the conversations but never overstate your opinion.





## **Never be afraid to say hello to strangers** | *Why?*

Everyone has value and everyone has a story worth sharing. Others will appreciate you for your interest in their lives. I can't stress the importance of this enough: you never know where a friendly encounter will take you. The first step in many of my most interesting journeys in my life was a conversation with a stranger.

## **Hard work & passion for what you do is the pathway to happiness** | *Why?*

When you're doing what you really enjoy for work, it won't feel like work no matter how hard it is. You will go to bed tired but satisfied, waking up the next day excited to dive right back in.



## **The network you develop in life will always reflect who you are and how people see you | *Why?***

This is essential, the people and community (a.k.a. the network) you associate with will directly reflect on who you are. Be wise to this in the social media world: what you post and who you associate with will reflect on your character.

## **Be okay with being wrong, often | *Why?***

Being wrong is something we all face from time to time and showing humility in the face of a mistake and admitting it is a short path to respect and learning.





## **Never ever forget: Manners make the person** | *Why?*

Others will always notice if you show basic manners. Using good manners gains you respect:

Say 'excuse me' when you burp or fart, open the door for others; especially elders, shake hands and say, "it's nice to meet you," keep your elbows off the table when you're eating, never talk with food in your mouth, and remember only swear if it's necessary; don't swear just to hear the words leave your mouth.

## **All the money in the world can't buy you a second of time** | *Why?*

As you get older, you will find that the most precious thing that life has to offer you is time. Always keep the passing of time as a focus in your life. We all take time for granted, and as I get older, I wish I had been more in-tune with how (and with whom) I spent my time. We only get one go-around in life and it is best to learn the value of time while you are still young; it will serve you well later on.





## **No matter how hard you may have it, there are many others who have it much harder** | *Why?*

Make it a regular habit to read about those living in third-world countries or lower-income areas to see how life is for them. This will help you stay grounded. No one likes to hear someone whine about a relatively easy life. Don't be a whiner over everyday struggles, so many others have it much harder and still choose to go through life with a smile.

## **Always be prepared to walk in someone else's shoes** | *Why?*

In order to better understand the journey that others take through life, we must always be ready to walk a mile in their shoes to see the world through their eyes. It will benefit you as well as ensure trust in the relationships you may build with these individuals.





## **If you can't say something nice about someone, don't say anything at all** | *Why?*

Do not develop a reputation as someone known for talking about others behind their backs. Sometimes it can't be helped but be very careful to avoid making it a habit.

## **Learn to play an instrument** | *Why?*

I have few regrets, but one of them is that I never learned to play an instrument—hopefully someday I will. Appreciating music is one thing but being able to sit down at a piano or pick up a guitar and play music makes you far more interesting as a person. The skills you develop while learning to play allows your brain to develop in areas beyond music and broadens the way you see the world.





## **When riding a bike on a path, always announce yourself** | *Why?*

When riding a bike, you always want to pass a person running, walking or riding on the left and you need to announce yourself a couple times; “passing on your left,” and then say, “thank you,” when they move over.

## **Make your bed every morning** | *Why?*

There are two important reasons you should do this daily: first, this habit will set you up mentally that you are ready to tackle the days' events and second, when you go to bed it is so nice to walk into your room and find a made-up bed ready to greet you.



## **Breathe through anxiety** | *Why?*

There are times when we all encounter situations and this is a simple fix that works wonders: sit or stand quietly and take five deep breaths, pause, then take another five deep breaths. The issue you are dealing with will not vanish, but I promise you that your ability to think through the problem will be much improved.

## **Scams and deception: do not trust ANYONE online** | *Why?*

At one time or another we have all been approached by someone pretending to be someone or something they are not. Online or on the phone, this type of scam is very common. As you start to explore the big wide world of the internet you will no doubt encounter people who are offering to sell you something or buy something from you, or in some case, simply wanting to be your friend. Please (and I say this very loudly), ask the people you trust (preferably your parents or older brothers and sisters) to look over the profile of who you are dealing with and offer their opinion.





## **Say excuse me when in conversation** | *Why?*

No one likes to be interrupted but there are times when you will need to interject something in the middle of a conversation. At such times, always say, 'excuse me,' and announce your reason for the interruption, whether you have a question or need help with a specific point being made. You will have announced yourself in two ways: first, as someone who is paying attention to the details of what is being said, and secondly, as someone with manners.

## **Take care of our animals** | *Why?*

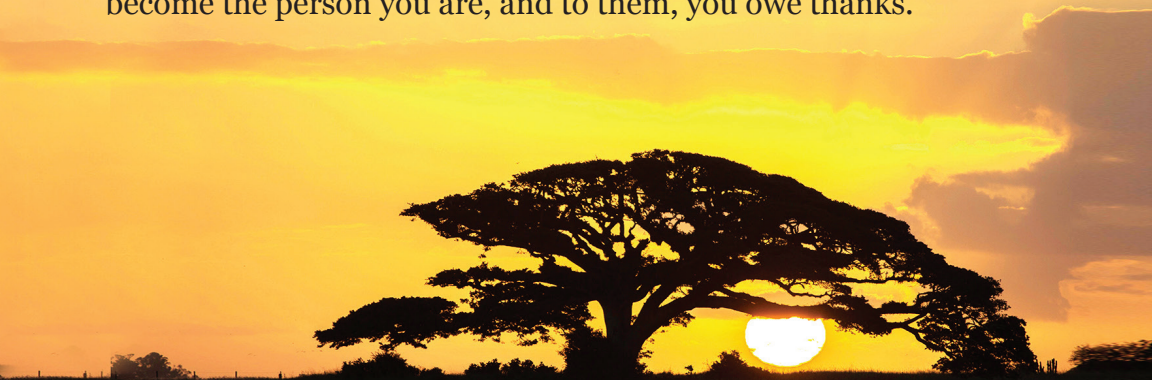
As a young person today, you have a genuine ability to impact the health of the planet and as the next generation of leaders, you must learn your place in the world and develop respect and wonder at the lives of other creatures. Learn that killing should not be the main focus of hunting; hunting should be reserved for procuring food. There is much to learn from our planet and much of it has been captured in nature shows. Watch them as often as you can and learn about the living world around us.



## Learn and practice the value of being grateful | *Why?*

I was in my forties before I really understood this. I can tell you when and where I was at the very moment that I made the decision to start learning to have deeper gratitude for who I was and with whom I shared my life. First, let's better understand what gratitude is: it's our ability to see the good in our lives. We must learn to acknowledge the gifts that have been given to us by others and to understand how influential various people have been in our lives. A really helpful practice is to keep a notebook you can write in at the end of each day, listing the things you are grateful for. It may sound silly, but I have been doing this for many years, and it really works. Studies have proved that keeping a journal has a positive effect on your physical and mental well-being and is equally beneficial to your relationship with others.

My moment of enlightenment came while I was sitting bedside with my father, who I was caring for due to his Alzheimer's disease. He was just hours away from passing on and it was a terribly upsetting moment. For the first time, I thought back on my life and acknowledged how selfish I had been so many times. Then, when my mother passed on a few years later, I was again reminded of the importance of gratitude and the ability to express it every day, with every sunrise and every sunset. If you take nothing else away from this collection of advice, take this: nothing in life will be as important as your respect for those who help you become the person you are, and to them, you owe thanks.







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**A grandfather's desire to share words of wisdom with the much younger generation.**

To all those future leaders of the world, life is the longest and most remarkable journey you will ever take. You are the captain of your own ship, and although others will join you on your travels, you must always remain in control. You will sail through seas that are stormy and some that are calm, and you will reach distant lands that are frightening and enlightening.

There is only one guarantee: Your adventures will be extraordinary.

It is my wish that your days are mostly sunny and that your waters remain calm, but when they are not, I hope that you will learn to navigate difficult times with pride in yourself and respect for everyone around you.

*-Papa Keith*

