

For Happy Living

Rules attributed to Boyce Bowdin

1. Strike a balance between work and play, between seriousness and laughter.
2. Stick with the truth even if it makes you look or feel badly. Falsehoods are like wandering ghosts.
3. Forgive your enemies as part of the price you pay for the privilege of being forgiven.
4. Spend time outside. Walk. Get lots of air and sunshine and occasionally some rain or snow in your face. Get some dirt on your hands.
5. Talk over your troubles, mistakes, and dreams with someone you trust.
6. Don't underestimate the ability of God to straighten out a situation—even when you can't. Be patient.
7. Discriminate among your fears. Learn to tell which ones are useful, which ones destructive.
8. When you can't sleep, say, "Aha! Here's a chance for a little privacy and creative thinking. Or prayer."
9. Fall in love with life, with children, older people, the theater, music, books, cities, hills, the sea—everything except money.

Give us courage and gaiety and the quiet mind.—Robert Louis Stevenson (1850–1894)

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According to a report in *The Express* newspaper of Easton, Pennsylvania, studies done by the consulting firm Priority Management show that “the average married couple spends four minutes a day in meaningful conversation, and the working couple spends 30 seconds a day talking with their children.”

Says the firm's president, Michael Fortino: “Most people say their families are important, but they don't live that way.”

Dr. Peter Atarian writes, “Fifty to seventy-five percent of medical complaints contain some element of stress. The top three drugs prescribed are Valium (a tranquilizer), Tagament (for ulcers), and Interall (for heart control).

“You can't function under a heavy load all the time. Imagine making a tight fist and holding it for 20 years! Just as you rotate tires so that they wear evenly, so you need to rotate or balance your activities in life.”

Time is...

Too slow for those who wait,
Too swift for those who fear,
Too long for those who grieve,
Too short for those who rejoice.
But for those who love, time is not.

—Henry Van Dyke (1852–1933)

A thermostat or a thermometer?

Some people are thermometers. They merely register what's going on around them. If the situation is tight and pressurized, they register tension and irritability. Others, however, are thermostats. They regulate the atmosphere in their homes. They are the mature ones, the agents of change who don't let the situation dictate their behavior.

So when things get hot at your house, don't just reflect what's going on—change things for the better. Be a thermostat, not a thermometer!

—Mark Merrill, *The Family Minute*