

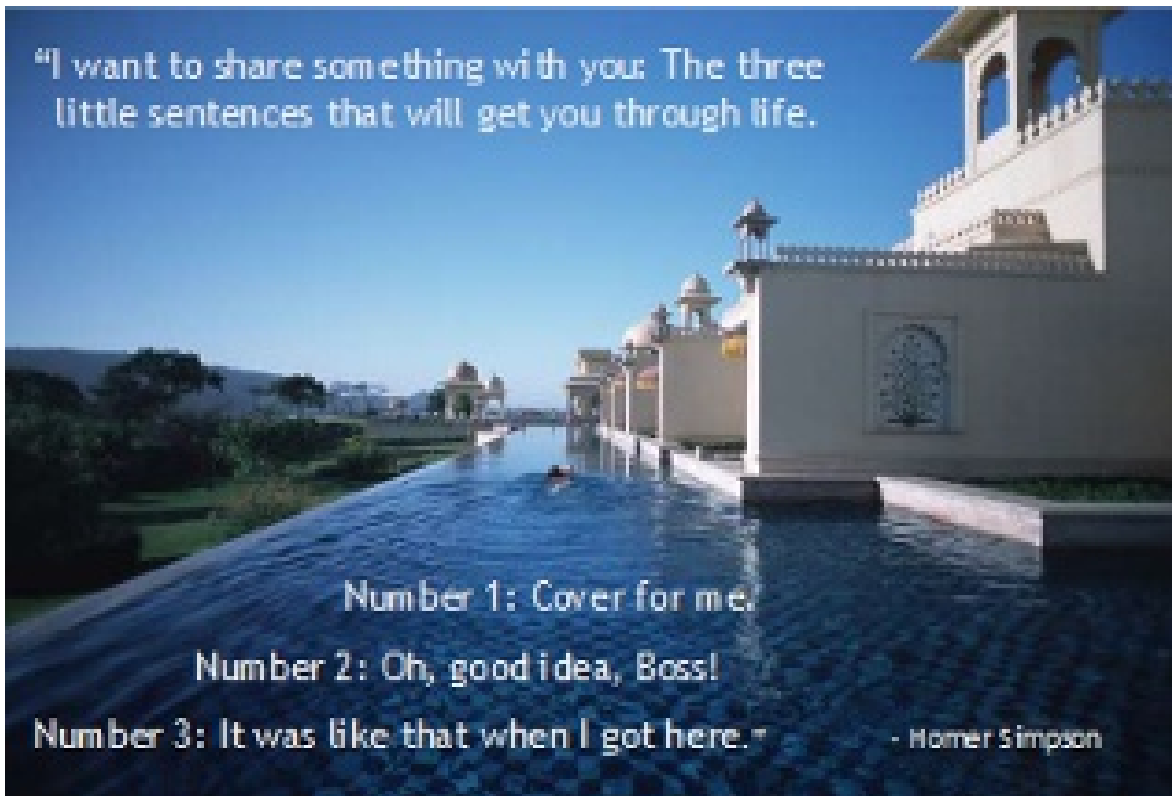
## Can I have a do over?

Wouldn't it be nice if after we lived through our teen years (or many more after that) and we could just ask for a do over? Unfortunately that doesn't happen but we all can try to learn from others and pursue good advice as best we can. As to why? I think these words from Jonas Salk answer that and they are good ones that we should all embrace;

**“Our greatest responsibility is to be good ancestors”.**

My hope is that this 'FREe B' is a little bit down that path. It is for those who have kids about to have teenagers or have some teens and you want to make sure they are prepared for their post high school years (at least positioned to take on those next years with a great foundation).

And please note. I'm sure there is a lot of other great ideas, comments or recommendations that could go along with the following. If you have anything you would recommend we add to what we have here, just use our **D2B Contact Form** and let us know.



So lets get started . . .

### **Section 1 = Rules all Teens should know.**

If your could pick out some rules to share with your teens – what would those be? Then, for those rules – what if you could only share 50 words or less on each one? Oh well, interesting to ponder. See what I have in the pages ahead and let me know what you would recommend.

Oh, and BTW (by the way), Homer's words above may not be what you or I would want to pass on to our teens but a little humor is always good to leverage when we can.

### **Section 2 = Things you should teach your Teens.**

Those years (while your teen is at home) will go by quickly.

If asked, what should you teach your teen before they move out, how would you respond?

Think about that

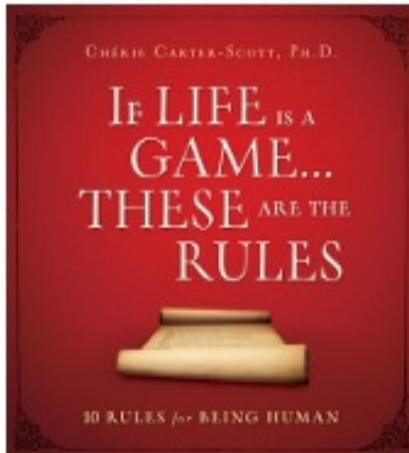
and then see what we have posted on this (in the pages further below). I think we all would agree that there is a lot that we should teach our teens but what would be the minimal set, is the challenge. What we share in the pages below is a great start. The how, what, when and where could differ for the early teen years versus the later teen years.

And with these shared, we hope you like what we have listed and if you have some addition comments or critical items that we should add, just let us know (via our Contact Form) what you recommend.



## Section 1 = Rules all Teens should know.

The following visuals and words are for your consideration. I offer these because at a minimum we don't have to believe they are all inclusive but they are thought provoking.



Have you ever thought  
“I wish life came with  
an instruction manual?”

Life has often been compared to a game.  
But we are never told how to play  
nor what it means to win.

That's why the  
*10 Rules for Being Human*  
are so important.

They answer our  
fundamental question,  
*“What is the purpose of life?”*

RULE ONE  
*You Will Receive a Body*

Make Peace with your body—  
Accept its imperfections and respect  
what your body needs to run its  
optimum performance.

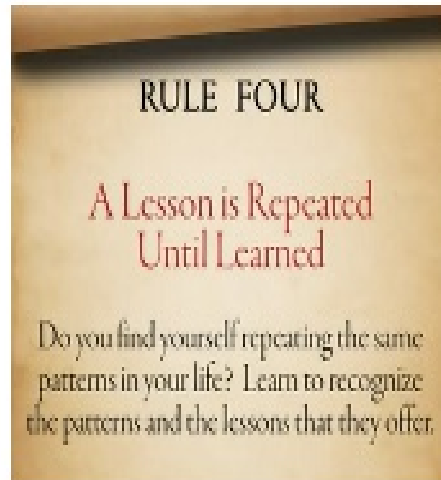
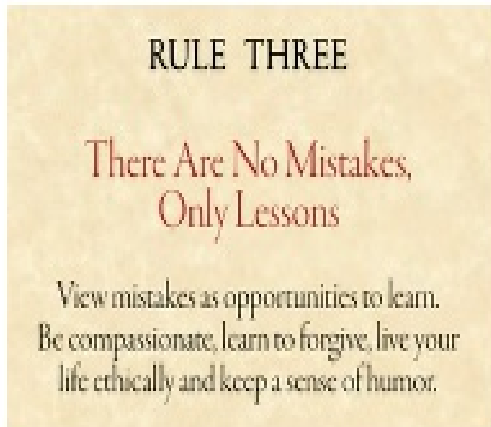
RULE TWO  
*You Will Be Presented  
With Lessons*

As you travel through life, you will  
encounter lessons *unique* to you.  
Be open to those lessons and choose  
actions that align with your true path.

First, think about how this book (**If Life is a Game. . . These are the Rules**) could be leveraged to give you talking points (as a father with your teenage kids). Second, how you leverage these rules shared from the book is up to you. For me – if I could go back and share these with my teenage kids, I would use this book and tell them something like the following:

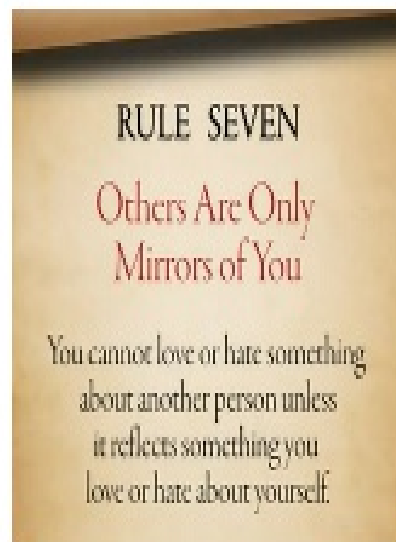
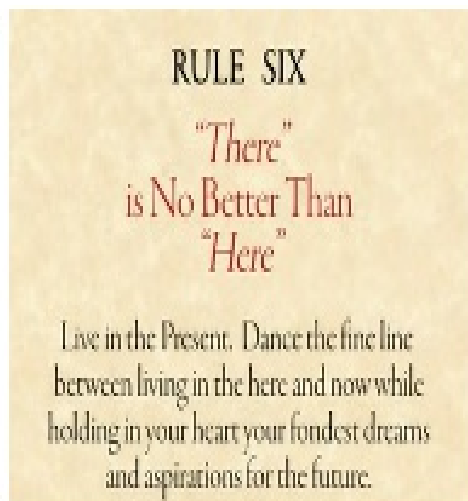
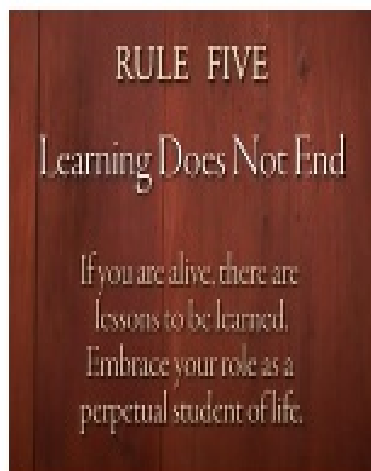
**R1: Our Body:** *Although there could be some things you don't like or you would at least like to improve upon, know that your body is yours to protect. What you eat, drink, take, whether you exercise or not, all matters. My prayers are that you are smart with your body and if you ever have any questions – just ask.*

**R2: Our Lessons:** *You will be surprised as to the how, the what and the when for your lessons to unfold. Some you will be glad to have unfold while others will happen at some of the worst times possible. Regardless of the event – good, bad or whatever, we always can learn from them. My prayers are that you appreciate the lessons in life that unfold for you.*



**R3: On Mistakes:** *Perception is a key attribute to acquire. Wisdom is one you'll pursue your whole life. Both are enabled by the experiences we have and the lessons we learn. My prayers are that you learn from your mistakes, understand that some lessons are harder than others and know that they all are okay. Failure isn't fatal and success isn't permanent. Know that we all have made mistakes, and yes we all have learned like you will. Apologize when you need to and always find a way to do what is needed.*

**R4: Until Learned:** *As your years unfold, you will see good times and some rough times. Make the time periodically to look at your life, how things are going and make decisions as needed for your months ahead. One saying, when you're in a hole, stop digging – is just one example of how you need to be able to recognize how you are doing, how you are reacting to the events of life. My prayers are that you see those times when your having to repeat some lessons, that they challenge you to end that cycle and move positively forward. Know that I or friends or mentors can help – just ask.*

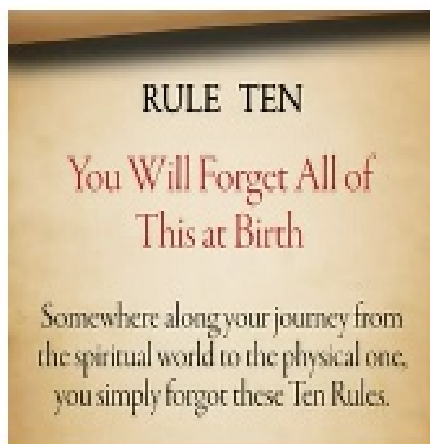
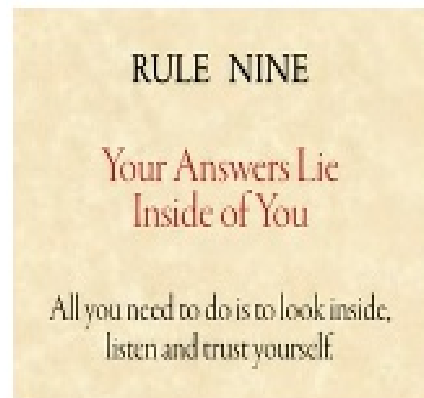
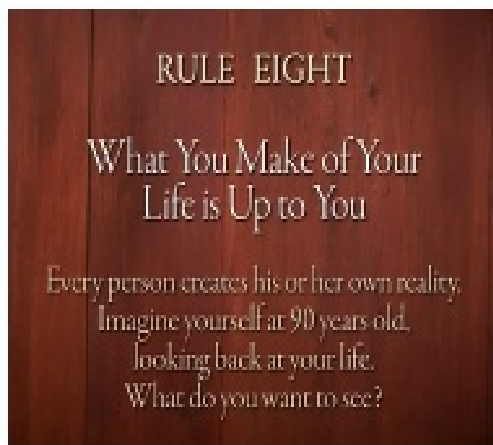


**R5: Our Learning:** *A closed mind is like a parachute – they only work when opened. Know that your mind is just like the muscles in your body. Inactivity leads to atrophy. My prayers are that you pursue life with a great attitude. Enjoy the fun times, learn from the hard times and remember that Mom and I are like you – living, learning, laughing and loving. Our life is God's gift to us. What we do with it is our gift to Him.*

**R6: Now is the Time:** *These are the years where your Play Hard times will begin to change and to need a balance with other aspects. Don't waste your time wishing things were better. Live each day to the best of your ability. You want something, work for it. If you want someone to know something, tell them. My prayers are that you realize and embrace the aspects of living in the present in ways that you will always be glad that you did. 'Woulda, Coulda, and Shoulda' are unfortunate words to ever say. So, never underestimate that now could be the right time to do what you must.*

**R7: Our Mirrors:** *Are around us more than we would think. The saying – we are judged by the company we keep – is just one of the mirrors we can leverage. Look at your friends; are they nice, are they ones you would trust, are they ones that your parents would respect? [and don't forget to look at yourself] How about your thoughts, words and actions – have you reviewed those recently? My prayers are that you are smart with your body and your mind.*

**R8: You Decide:** *You may be impacted to some degree by the actions of others but you are always impacted by what you think, say and do. Most of the time if you pursue the good things in life, you'll be glad upon your circumstances. When the not so good unfolds, it is okay. You can handle everything that unfolds. You are accountable for how you feel and what you achieve. My prayers are that you understand that there are so many roads to happiness. Some have challenges, set backs and or tears along the way. Choose wisely in all that you do.*



**R9: You already know:** *God doesn't make junk. You have a mind, body and soul. Within you is the foundation for your success. You know what is good, what is evil and you are never alone. My prayers are that in your times of "what should I do?", that you know that Mom and I are always glad to give you advice. If for some reason we're not available, the Holy Spirit is within you. Know that you can talk with God at any time. Listen to the small voice within you – He will guide you.*

**R10: Don't Forget:** *You will forget things and that is what this world does to us. My prayers are that you understand who you really are – one that is special, who has purpose. one who must pursue a life that understands your faith and how that will impact your years to come. Know that your faith journey is one that never ends and Mom and I will always do what we can to encourage your faith.*

Now there (above) are ten rules that you could find a creative way to share with your teenage kids. **Why?** To get some dialog started and then you could build upon these over time (discussion is good).



You just have to remember that there are so many different things that we can share with our kids. Sometimes it is an event or a picture or even some words shared that trigger an opportunity to talk or to teach. We parents have to decide how well we will do our job

(that is to provide, to protect, to teach, to listen, to encourage, etc. etc).

My hope is that all the above (and what is on the pages to follow) gives you some things to consider. Leverage anything you think is helpful and don't forget, what is shared may trigger some good ideas or even some better recommendations.

And if you have some feedback, let us know.

## Section 2 = Things you should teach your Teens.

Okay, I hope by the time you are reading these words, you are well under way on thinking of how best to teach the good things that you want your teen to know. For those good efforts in process, continue. What I ask for via the following is to see if what we share is similar to what you are pursuing or some good ideas to add to your plans.

For example: The following list was shared via the internet. I took that information and posted it below with a few of my added comments that I hope you would agree to. So then, consider these:

### **Start with – what things does your teen need to learn sometime before they move out?**

\_ **How to cook** (at least something that doesn't come in a box with powder labeled "sauce"). This is something that they can start to learn when they are younger and can then grow skills as their teen years unfold. When they are out on their own is too late. Why? you need to be realistic and anticipate college meal plans or 'starting out expenses'. You'll find students are probably paying well over \$5 a meal at many universities and if they are out on their own, eating out expenses can vary greatly.

If your teen develops some cooking skills, when they are out on their own, they will be prepared.

\_ **How to say "no"**. This is an important one. Not only can people who don't know how to say "no" wind up getting into trouble, it also is an enabler for being over-scheduled and stressed. Add to that the reality that they'll be presented with a lot of questionable options and you see the reality that you won't be there to monitor or to help them.

Knowing this presents the challenge – when do you want to work on this, to teach you child how to say 'no' ? The earlier this is learned, the better.



## **Next – consider the things to teach when your teen is in their Jr. High School years.**

**How to study.** It seems silly, but even a lot of students who do really well in high school fall apart in college because they don't know how to study. In college, it's not enough to read the textbook. They need to know how to identify what they're expected to know, what the point of the lesson is, and how to test themselves (preferably multiple times) before the professor does.

At college time; unlike high school teachers, professors may not have any actual education in educating (they expect their students to know how to study), so they can't count on the teacher to feed them the info anymore.

**How to write an essay.** They won't just be writing essays as homework, but as part of their tests. They don't have time to write and rewrite, so they need a formula.

Many would recommend the [five-paragraph essay format](#), as it seems to work well for most subjects.

**How to proofread.** They won't be able to have Mom and Dad go over their work anymore, and in college, they shouldn't be surprised if their history or theater teachers take points off for grammar errors.

They need to learn actions for [proofreading their own writing](#).

**How to put on a condom.** These days, many schools offer abstinence-only sex education. Even if you agree with this policy in general, it's unlikely your teen won't become sexually active at some point 'down the road'. If you don't feel comfortable teaching them (or you think they'd be too mortified watching Mom put a condom on a banana), your local Planned Parenthood can help.

And remember, what you don't teach them, they will learn from their friends or learn by trial and error.

\_ **Basic first aid.** Accidents happen, so make sure your teen knows how to administer immediate and appropriate treatment for burns and cuts in addition to CPR. If you're not good at these, you and they can learn together.

\_ **Basic home / car repair and maintenance.** They don't need to know how to build an ark, but knowing basic stuff is critical. Like how to find and use the water shut off. Where the power circuit breakers are and how they work, and fixing a minor plumbing issue or the toilet isn't just handy, it builds confidence. They need to know how to change a tire so they are not stranded. They also need you to show them how to jump start a battery and if at all possible, make sure they know what the oil dip stick is, the antifreeze, belts, brake fluid, checking tire air pressure, etc.

[By their Sr. High School years,](#)  
[these are critical to teach them for your 'final readiness' plan:](#)

\_ **How to grocery shop on a budget.** If you're going to be opting out of that pricey meal plan for their college days, you'll be relying on your kid to spend their (or possibly your) money wisely. They need to know how to shop without spending a boatload of money.

Pro tip: If you're going to be footing the bill for their food down the road, get them a gift card for a local grocery store for a set amount each month, that way, they can't blow their lunch money on partying.

\_ **How to do their laundry.** This is not one of those control issues – it is another life skill to learn. For example, do they know what to do when there's a stain? How to separate their clothes and what temperatures to use?

Think about it. Even if your teen can really do their own laundry at home, they've just been using whatever settings you told them to on your machine for probably 10 years. When they get to a new machine, will they actually know what to do?

\_ **How to budget and pay bills.** Even if your teen has had a job before, that doesn't mean they really know how to budget money. After all, they've always had Mom and Dad to back them up if they ran out. Make sure they know how to budget money for the month so they know how much money they really have and how (and when) to pay bills, how they can then afford fun things, etc.

As a side note on this – consider this: You need to help them to get and maintain a part time job during their 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> grades. When they do, work with them to open a checking account and a savings account. This will help to prepare them for when 'credit card' opportunities come along soon.

\_ **How to use a credit card.** Even if they don't have one yet, the offers will start pouring in shortly after they get their own mailbox. And when they become adults, you have to accept that they don't need your permission to sign up for one.

Last on this, make sure they understand interest rates (which are insanely high when you're 18 and the only thing on your credit history is the student loan you haven't started paying back yet), when it's OK to use the card (that is, not to buy tons of cute clothes you couldn't otherwise afford) and how best to ensure payments on them.

\_ How to send a professional email. If you don't, they may regret sending their professor a note that says "what up, Dr. B!" In their high school time, it is also a great time to discuss and teach the pros and cons of social media. Because they may regret the digital foot print that remains down the road.

**Thank you for considering all of the above  
and below.**

Don't forget to team your teens about boundaries  
(they have some awareness – they don't want you in their room).  
Help them to understand the big picture on this.

