# 42 RULES OF LIFE

For the last few years, I’ve been working on a list of life rules. My goal in this was to encapsulate my beliefs and core life concepts into concise, pithy statements.

I have unapologetically begged, borrowed, stolen, mixed, matched and modified some of these to suit my purposes. Since I don’t believe in original thought (I’d wager that all co-occur or are independently thought by multiple parties), if you want to attribute any these to someone in particular, do whatever floats your boat…I may live by them, but I make no original claim to them

This list will be a constant work-in-progress, but here’s what I have so far:

\*\*Rule #1\*\* Nothing is impossible. The very word says I’m Possible. If the Universe is infinite, and all indications are that it is, then possibility must be equally infinite.

\*\*Rule #2\*\* Just because it’s possible doesn’t mean it’s a good idea. Use data to make your case one way or the other, if data is available. Be thoughtful and analytical, and don’t jump to conclusions or make rash decisions.

\*\*Rule #3\*\* Humans aren’t machines, and work best in fits and spurts. Work should be done when and where you feel most productive. Just get it done, on-time and high quality.

\*\*Rule #4\*\* You can’t do everything yourself. And even if you can, you probably shouldn’t. Collaborate and delegate wherever possible.

\*\*Rule #5\*\* The only constant is change, so you should be changing constantly. Try new things. Run tests. Get out of your comfort zone. Never permit yourself to settle into a rut.

\*\*Rule #6\*\* Your time is precious, limited, and an unknown quantity. Value it highly, and don’t waste it.

\*\*Rule #7\*\* Living is more important than just surviving. It’s better to die while truly living, than live while slowly dying.

\*\*Rule #8\*\* The choice is always yours. Nobody can make your decisions for you, unless you let them. That said, consequences are often out of your control, so choose wisely.

\*\*Rule #9\*\* Only do the things that you and only you can do.

\*\*Rule #10\*\* Be yourself. It’s far better to be the best you than a pale imitation of someone else.

\*\*Rule #11\*\* Passion sometimes trumps intelligence. Having both is best, but passion can persist long past the point where intelligence gives up.

\*\*Rule #12\*\* The past is in the past, and it’s best to leave it there. Learn from it and move on.

\*\*Rule #13\*\* Education and formal education are not the same thing. Real world experience trumps classroom education, and a thirst for knowledge is more valuable than any degree.

\*\*Rule #14\*\* The past is not automatically an indicator of the future. Don’t fall into the “past performance indicates future performance” trap. Nobody can predict the future without a healthy dose of luck.

\*\*Rule #15\*\* Working to improve your strengths is far more impactful than working to overcome your weaknesses. A bit of both is fine, but the bulk of your effort should go into improving and leveraging your strengths.

\*\*Rule #16\*\* Surround yourself with people who compliment you, a balance of their strengths to your weaknesses, and vice versa.

\*\*Rule #17\*\* Always keep your word. Do what you say you’ll do, when you say you’ll do it. Be reliable and trustworthy.

\*\*Rule #18\*\* If you’re not 10 minutes early, you’re late. Be punctual.

\*\*Rule #19\*\* Hope for the best, expect the worst. Proper previous planning prevents piss poor performance. Be prepared.

\*\*Rule #20\*\* Attention to detail is the mark of an organized mind. Pay attention to the little things.

\*\*Rule #21\*\* The joy is in the journey, not the destination. Perfection is impossible, but the pursuit of perfection is admirable.

\*\*Rule #22\*\* Blame is pointless, and rarely satisfies anything but pride or anger. You can’t change the past, and everyone makes mistakes; learn from them and move on.

\*\*Rule #23\*\* There is no free choice without accountability. To be truly free, one must be accountable for one’s actions.

\*\*Rule #24\*\* There are exceptions to almost every rule, but that is a dangerous line of thought. Thinking you’re an exception usually leads to trouble. That said, perhaps you ARE an exception. Consider all possibilities.

\*\*Rule #25\*\* Great rewards go hand-in-hand with great risks. Never be afraid to take risks, but think them through carefully first.

\*\*Rule #26\*\* Choices have consequences, for yourself and for others. Always consider the ripple-effect of your choices on others. That said, sometimes you just need to be selfish, and put your needs first.

\*\*Rule #27\*\* Fear is not real. It is a product of your mind. One must acknowledge fear, analyze the trigger, and use logic to determine the validity of the fear. Never let raw fear drive your decisions. Face your fears head on.

\*\*Rule #28\*\* Traditions are dangerous, so be mindful of them. Having them is fine, but following them blindly is foolish.

\*\*Rule #29\*\* Your perception defines your reality. Remember, there is no spoon.

\*\*Rule #30\*\* You can’t always control what happens to you, but you can always control how you respond. Don’t EVER dwell on things that you can’t control (especially the past).

\*\*Rule #31\*\* Be the best dressed person in the room.

\*\*Rule #32\*\* It never hurts to ask. You may not get what you ask for, but if you don’t ask, the outcome is no different.

\*\*Rule #33\*\* Speak your mind. Be cognizant of the emotions and opinions of others, but if something really needs to be said, then say it.

\*\*Rule #34\*\* Empathy and sympathy are not the same. Don’t confuse the two.

\*\*Rule #35\*\* Beware of cognitive dissonance. Reality is largely subjective, and though you may not like another’s POV, it is more real to them than your own. They may be right, you may be wrong. Remember, have strong beliefs loosely held.

\*\*Rule #36\*\* You are the average of the 5 people you spend the most time with, and you can only maintain strong bonds to a limited number of people, so be highly selective. Quality companionship is more important than ties of proximity, blood, or time…never hesitate to prune a dead limb from your network.

\*\*Rule #37\*\*

Life should be enjoyed, not just endured. If you don’t love what you’re doing, don’t do it. Fuck yes or no

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\*\*Rule #38\*\* Learn from others wherever possible. The experiences and mistakes of others are a highly efficient shortcut.

\*\*Rule #39\*\* Perfection is the enemy of doneness. Good enough is very often good enough.

\*\*Rule #40\*\*

If you want to be good at something, know the rules well. If you want to be great at something, know which rules can be bent, and which can be broken

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\*\*Rule #41\*\* Question everything. Rules, authority, traditions. Don’t accept things at face value. Reality is negotiable.

\*\*Rule #42\*\* Human stupidity is infinite, so examine everything with that in mind. And never attribute to malice that which can be explained by ignorance or stupidity.