

The Rules



According to Sister Alma Rose

Mary Campbell

"The Rules According to Sister Alma Rose"
by Mary Campbell

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A Zero Gravity Little Book

Includes excerpts from

Unfamiliar Territory, by Mary Campbell

Daddy Pete, by Mary Campbell

Sister Alma Rose Has the Last Word,

<http://almarose.wordpress.com>

Printed on recycled paper

Dedicated to the Class of 2009





The Last Spoonful, Briton Rivière

1. Y'all do not worry

This is the *entire point of*
growing up.

*God grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
And wisdom to know the difference.*
—Reinhold Niebuhr



Kate Greenaway

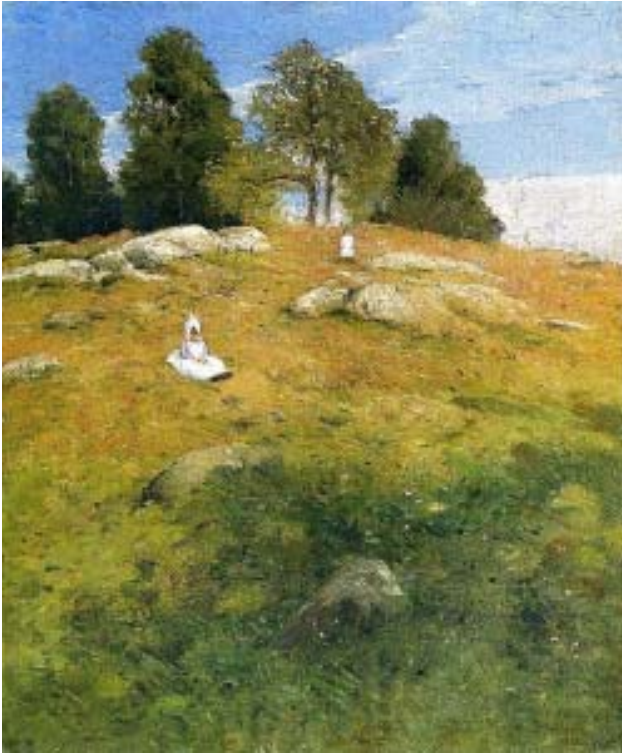


The Fall, Michelangelo

2. Do not waste y'all's time
and energy feeling guilty

If y'all have made a mistake, fix it
if y'all can. Make amends, if pos-
sible. Find the lesson. Then let it
go. *Do not beat y'all's self up!*

*Mistakes are possible only
before y'all make them.
After that, they are the
raw material of y'all's life.*



Summer Afternoon Shinnecock Landscape,
Julien Alden Weir

Review

1. No worries
2. No regrets

If, after living fully in the moment, y'all have enough energy for guilt and worry, then y'all have enough energy to come by and paint Sister Alma Rose's kitchen.



An Anglo-Saxon king and his witan, from the eleventh-century Old English Hexateuch (British Library)

3. Do not put people in clumps

Regard *everyone* as unique and holy.* Engage in "I-Thou" rather than "I-It" relationships.

** Some folks seem to be bad to the bone. Sister Alma Rose theorizes that they are androids and soulless. But she is not sure.*



St. Francis of Assisi with Al Kamil, fifteenth century



I can look on (a tree) as a picture: stiff column in a shock of light, or splash of green shot with the delicate blue and silver of the background.

I can perceive it as movement: flowing veins on clinging, pressing pith, suck of the roots, breathing of the leaves, ceaseless commerce with earth and air – and the obscure growth itself.

I can classify it in a species and study it as a type in its structure and mode of life. I can subdue its actual presence and form so sternly that I recognise it only as an expression of law....

I can dissipate it and perpetuate it in number....

In all this, the tree remains my object, occupies space and time, and has its nature and constitution.

It can, however, also come about, if I have both will and grace, that in considering the tree I become bound up in relation to it. The tree is no longer It. I have been seized by the power of exclusiveness.

—Martin Buber, I and Thou



4. Y'all treat yourself as if y'all were pregnant, even if y'all are a male or 93

Everyone is pregnant with his or her future self.



The Enchanted Garden of Messer Ansaldo,
Marie Spartali Stillman

Review

3. Be kind to others
4. Be kind to y'all's self

*Be good but not too good;
A little naughty but not too
naughty;
Say a prayer if you feel that way;
Say "damn" if it gives you
consolation;
Be kind in the world always, if
possible;
Yet, if you must be unkind,
Smash right and left,
get it over with,
and forget about it.*
—F. Collins Whitman



Kate Greenaway



*Archangels
Michael and
Gabriel,
twelfth
century*

5. Y'all keep an open mind

All things are possible. Today's miracle is tomorrow's science. Of all the phenomena in all the universes, we understand less than a fingernail's worth.



*photo © Luc Viafour,
GFDL/CC*



*Madonna and child with eight angels,
Alessandro Botticelli*

6. Prayers, thoughts, and imagin-
ings are pure and potent energy

Emanate love and warmth, face
to face or across the galaxies.
Y'all will change the world.





The Garden of Eden, Jan Brueghel the Elder

Lovingkindness Meditation

May you be happy
May you be healthy
May you be peaceful
May you live with ease

—*Susan Piver, How Not to Be
Afraid of Your Own Life*



*The Swing,
Jean-Honore Fragonard*



7. Meditate...

...for y'all's mental and physical health

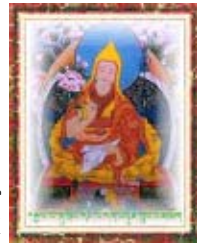
...to find God

...to find y'all's self

...to be at peace in all circumstances

...when there's nothing else to do

*The first incarnation of the
Dalai Lama, 1391-1474*





Walking meditation helps y'all feel supported

Grounding meditation helps y'all recapture scattered pieces of y'all's self





*Muslims at prayer, Antonio Melina,
Agência Brasil, 2003*

Review

5. Keep an open mind
6. Pray
7. Meditate

*Meadow Elves,
Nils Blommer*





*The
thing
that
upsets
people is
not what
happens
but what
they
think it
means.
—Epictetus*

Camille en Métier, Claude Monet

Guard Y'all's Serenity

8. Don't take *nothing* personally

9. Don't take y'all's self too
serious

10. Don't try to crawl into other
folks' minds to untangle the web
of meanings and motives

*A person without a sense of humor is like a
wagon without springs, jolted by every
pebble in the road. —Henry Ward*



*The
Farmer's
Boy,*
John Linnell

Work

11. Find the work that brings you joy
—This is y'all's place in creation.

12. Work hard; don't struggle
—Struggling is a sign that y'all are swimming against the tide.

*Jesus and the Twelve Apostles,
detail from The Tribute Money, Masaccio*



'We Are All Meant to Shine'

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

—Marianne Williamson, *A Return to Love*



*Sunrise
at Camp
Kaleo
(photo
by Deb
Kirwan)*

13. Practice gratitude

Y'all didn't get your own self here, did y'all? Be grateful for the life y'all are given. Be grateful that the sun rose today. Be grateful that y'all have matching socks. Notice how good it feels just to breathe, to drink water when y'all are thirsty....

Be grateful for the flat tire and the crabby boss. Every challenge creates an opportunity for y'all to grow. Inconveniences are steps along the path to where y'all are going.

Giving thanks - to a friend, family member, someone in your community, or even just to the Universe - can make all the difference in the world. —Robyn Hessinger



*photo by
Luc Viafour,
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14. Cherish y'all's family

A strong, loving, supportive family is a gift from the universe, a blessing that can't be earned.

Nor do y'all deserve mean-spirited, small-minded relatives. Don't y'all try to fix them. Just forgive them and stay as close as y'all can without getting poisoned.

Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to let you in. —Robert Frost



15. Cherish the natural world

Immerse y'all's self in nature. Go hiking or camping or birdwatching or sailing. Plant a garden. Pay attention to the cycles; they are free life lessons.





Review

13. Practice gratitude

14. Cherish y'all's family

15. Cherish the natural world

*Research shows that people who are grateful,
optimistic, & forgiving have better life experiences,
are more happy, & achieve higher incomes.
—PsychDigest via Twitter, May 2009*

*Human affection is not poured forth vainly,
even though it meet no return. Love enriches
the nature, enlarging, purifying, and elevating it.*

—Mary Baker Eddy



16. Y'all be bold

*Love boldly, without fear of re-
jection but without arrogance.*

*Walk boldly through life, at a
brisk, steady pace.*

*This is my secret: I don't mind what
happens. —J. Krishnamurti*



17. Never hurry

When y'all rush around, y'all make stupid mistakes.

18. Take calculated risks

Y'all will make mistakes sometimes, but they'll be *smart* mistakes, and y'all won't be afraid to take responsibility for them.



*Cherry pie
with salsa*

19. Don't y'all worship y'all's
kids or sweetheart; money or
status; property or position.
Only God is a sure thing.

Y'all are a child of God created not quite complete, not quite perfect, like a luscious cherry pie with a piece missing. As if God kept a small but essential part of y'all in Heaven... giving y'all freedom with a lifeline.

The pie doesn't feel the emptiness. It doesn't crave satisfaction. Y'all do, which is just as well, or why get out of bed?

Y'all get hungry, y'all grow food and eat. Y'all get thirsty, y'all find water and drink. Y'all get cold, y'all build a house. Y'all get anxious and fearful, y'all do every manner of crazy things.

Only God can restore a broken spirit. If y'all replace the missing piece of pie with salsa, y'all don't have a whole, perfect, restored cherry pie. What y'all have is a big mess, which y'all stick in the refrigerator on Death Row next to the Gift Box of Exotic Cheeses.

*—Mary Campbell, *Unfamiliar Territory**



Adoration of the Magi
—Bar-
tolome
Estéban
Murillo

Review

16. Be bold
17. Never hurry
18. Take calculated risks
19. Worship God and God alone





20. Get ready for the day from the inside out

For Sister Alma Rose, "getting ready" looks like this:

1. *Pray, give thanks*
2. *Meditate*
3. *Journal*
4. *Go for a walk*
5. *Take a shower*
6. *Get dressed*
7. *Eat a good breakfast*

Other Daily Tasks

8. *Take care of business: clean up, pay bills*
9. *Perform a mitzvah (loosely, "good deed")*
10. *Visit friends, family, sick folks*
11. *Farm and garden chores*
12. *Household chores*
13. *Community responsibilities*
14. *Learn something new*
15. *Enjoy large glass of Mr. Truman LaFollette's lemonade on porch*
16. *Sigh a big sigh of contentment, give thanks*
17. *And so forth*



Be Joyful!