



Unitarian Universalist  
Small Group Ministry  
Network Website



## **Rules For Being Human / Growing Through Spiritual Practice** **Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church, Hayward, CA, 12 June 2019**

### **CHALICE LIGHTING**

**1 min**

Human beings will continue to deceive and overpower one another. Basically, everyone exists in the very nature of suffering, so to abuse or mistreat each other is futile. The foundation of all spiritual practice is love. That you practice this well is my only request.

*Dalai Lama*

### **SILENT MEDITATION / CENTERING**

**2 min**

The first sound of the gong brings us to silence. Please take time to center yourself, and temporarily push aside whatever might be preventing you from participating fully in **tonight's** session. The second sound of the gong returns us to each other's presence.

### **OPENING WORDS**

**1 min**

We all want to live a happy life and have a right to do so, whether through work or spiritual practice. I'm subject to destructive emotions like anger and jealousy the same as you, but we all have potential for good too. However, our existing education system is oriented towards material development; neglecting inner values. Consequently we lack a clear awareness of the inner values that are the basis of a happy life.

*Dalai Lama*

### **CHECK-IN (2 ROUNDS)**

**36 min**

Please share some thing(s) about your life since last we met. If you feel comfortable about it, mention something that may have changed your daily routine or caused you to begin or alter your daily spiritual practice(s).

### **INTRODUCTION:**

**10 min**

#### **10 Rules for Being Human**

This material appeared in an article by this name in UPLIFT on April 17, 2016.

Adaptations of this list have been widely-circulated online as the *9 Rules for Being Human (Handed Down from Ancient Sanskrit)*; however the original source is actually [Chérie Carter-Scott](#), a corporate trainer and consultant, who composed the list, which she named *The Ten Rules for Being Human* for one of her workshops.

Right away, the *Rules* resonated with her clients, who photocopied and passed the list to friends and relatives. Within months, Chérie's *Rules* were in thousands of homes all over the United States, and eventually, they were published in *Chicken Soup for the Soul*. She went on to write the book *If Life is a Game, These Are the Rules* in 1998, which offers further teachings on the rules so you can conquer life's challenges and manage its unpredictable ups and downs.

Although there's no formula to help you win the game of life, Dr Chérie Carter-Scott's *Rules for Being Human* convey a universal wisdom that, once understood and embraced, can contribute to meaningful relationships with ourselves and others.

### **If Life is a Game, These Are the Rules**

When you were born, you didn't come with an owner's manual; these guidelines make life work better.

#### **1. You Will Receive a Body**

You may like it or hate it, but it's the only thing you are sure to keep for the rest of your life.

#### **2. You Will Learn Lessons**

You are enrolled in a full-time informal school called "Life on Planet Earth." Every person or incident is the Universal Teacher.

#### **3. There are No Mistakes, Only Lessons**

Growth is a process of experimentation. "Failures" are as much a part of the process as "success."

#### **4. A lesson is Repeated Until Learned**

It is presented to you in various forms until you learn it – then you can go on to the next lesson.

#### **5. "There" is No Better Than "Here"**

When your "there" becomes a "here" you will simply obtain another "there" that again looks better than "here."

#### **6. Others Are Only Mirrors of You**

You cannot love or hate something about another unless it reflects something you love or hate in yourself.

#### **7. What You Make of Your Life is Up to You**

Every person creates his or her own reality. Imagine yourself at 90 years old, looking back at your life. What do you want to see?

#### **8. You Always Get What You Want**

Your subconscious rightfully determines what energies, experiences, and people you attract – therefore, the only foolproof way to know what you want is to see what you have. There are no victims, only students.

#### **9. Your Answers Lie Inside of You**

All you need to do is to look inside, listen, and trust yourself.

### **10. You Will Forget All of This at Birth**

Somewhere along your journey from the spiritual world to the physical one, you simply forgot these *Rules*. But you can remember at any time.

#### **Spiritual Practice(s)**

Along the road to being human many people recognize the need to develop “spiritual practices” to keep them reminded of these *Rules*.

From the website <spiritualpractice.ca>

**What is a Spiritual Practice?** Here’s one definition: “A spiritual practice is any regular and intentional activity that establishes, develops, and nourishes a personal relationship with the Divine in which we allow ourselves to be transformed.” And here’s another (from <awakening.intuition.com>). “A spiritual practice or spiritual discipline (often including spiritual exercises) is the regular or full-time performance of actions and activities undertaken for the purpose of inducing spiritual experiences and cultivating spiritual development.”

There are three (3) stages of spiritual disciplines: the personal (which we are concerned with here), the communal, and the missional. Personal spiritual disciplines refer to regular (daily) practices in which we engage, in order that we may be able to express our faith communally out of deep inner conviction and passion, rather than out of duty, custom, or fear: These disciplines include: Meditation, prayer, fasting, study, simplicity, discernment, pilgrimage, forgiveness, dying well, solitude, submission, and honoring the body.

#### **QUOTES TO PONDER**

**10 min**

Spiritual practice is the capacity to offer your love even when you feel hurt, closed down, tense, angry, misunderstood, or hated.

David Deida

I encourage people to have a daily spiritual practice; that’s the best way to take care of yourself. If you have that daily practice, it means you’re getting divine guidance, and you’re not being guided by your ego or your personality.

Iyanla Vanzant

I feel that the essence of spiritual practice is your attitude toward others. When you have a pure, sincere motivation, then you have right attitude toward others based on kindness, compassion, love and respect.

Dalai Lama

Writing is a spiritual practice in that people that have no spiritual path can undertake it and, as they write, they begin to wake up to a larger connection. After a while, people tend to find that there is some muse that they are connecting to.

Julia Cameron

The deeper you get into Yoga you realize it is a spiritual practice. It's a journey I'm making. I'm heading that way.

Sting

If you don't have a spiritual practice in place when times are good, you can't expect to suddenly develop one during a moment of crisis.

Douglas Coupland

There is no fundamental difference between the preparation for death and the practice of dying, and spiritual practice leading to enlightenment.

*Stanislav Grof*

As long as I was breathing with the contractions and not pushing against them, I felt better. That idea is fundamental-to feel pain and not to resist; to go towards it. It is an incredibly spiritual practice.

*Christy Turlington*

Spiritual practice should not be confused with grim duty. It is the laughter of the Dalai Lama and the wonder born with every child.

*Jack Kornfield*

I think having a good yoga practice and a spiritual practice is a recipe for living well and, hopefully, living longer. *Trudie Styler*

Spiritual practice is not just sitting and meditation. Practice is looking, thinking, touching, drinking, eating and talking. Every act, every breath, and every step can be practice and can help us to become more ourselves.

*Nhat Hanh*

Above all, cancer is a spiritual practice that teaches me about faith and resilience.

*Kris Carr*

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.

*Marianne Williamson*

The goal of spiritual practice is full recovery, and the only thing you need to recover from is a fractured sense of self.

*Marianne Williamson*

There isn't anything except your own life that can be used as ground for your spiritual practice. Spiritual practice is your life, twenty-four hours a day.

*Pema Chodron*

Easy is right. Begin right and you are easy. Continue easy and you are right. The right way to go easy is to forget the right way, and forget that the going is easy.

*Chuang Tzu*

**Song: "Now I'm Easy" (Eric Bogle)**

**4 min**

**<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mIp5aJMzKbo>>**

**PREPARATION FOR GROUP REFLECTION**

**1 min**

**BREAK**

**10 min**

**GROUP REFLECTION AND FEEDBACK ON THE RULES AND DEVELOPING YOUR SPIRITUAL PRACTICE(S)**

**36 min**

Two rounds. For the first round, talk about the Ten Rules. Explain your understanding of the Rules, and talk about any issues you have with them. Following this, we will try to resolve to the satisfaction of all the issues brought up.

For the second round, talk about your own, personal spiritual practice(s), addressing the following, if you want to.

1.	Did any of the quotes resonate with you particularly? Do you disagree with any? Why, or why not?
2.	Describe your current spiritual practice(s), if you have one or some. How long have you been practicing, how has your practice changed over the years.
3.	Do you actually “practice” your spiritual practice every day? If not, why not? Tell us about how it fits into your schedule, how often you do it, and what tells you you need to do it.
4.	Is your current spiritual practice fairly well established, or does it grow with you? How do you decide what to incorporate permanently and what to drop.
5.	If you do not have a current spiritual practice, why not? If you feel you want one, what is holding you back from starting one.
6.	Are you interested in learning about the spiritual practices suggested by Soul Matters for the monthly worship themes (when our SGM is discussing the same theme)?

**SONG: SWIMMING TO THE OTHER SIDE (Pat Humphries)**

**5 min**

**Performed by Lui Collins <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BNKnBBX8I-4>>**

**NB: Start at about 0:55 for teaching of descant; 2:14 for actual song.**

**SUMMER PLANS / FUTURE TOPICS**

**5 min**

It is time to finalize our summer plans, decide when we will return to our regular schedule, and choose the topics for our summer and early fall sessions. These are the 2019-2020 Soul Matters themes:

What Does it Mean to be a People of...

Sept: Expectation  
 Oct: Belonging  
 Nov: Attention  
 Dec: Awe  
 Jan: Integrity  
 Feb: Resilience

March: Wisdom  
 April: Liberation  
 May: Thresholds  
 June: Play

**SESSION FEEDBACK**

**2 min**

**EXTINGUISH CHALICE / CLOSING WORDS**

**1 min**

People on a spiritual path--personal growth, spiritual practice, recovery, yoga, and so forth--are the last people who should be sitting out the social and political issues of our day.

*Marianne Williamson*

**SONG LYRICS**

**THE COCKIE FARMER ("NOW I'M EASY")**

**Composed and Performed by Eric Bogle**

For nearly sixty years, I've been a Cockie  
Of droughts and fires and floods I've lived through plenty  
This country's dust and mud have seen my tears and blood  
But it's nearly over now, and now I'm easy

I married a fine girl when I was twenty  
But she died in giving birth when she was thirty  
No flying doctor then, just a gentle old black 'gin  
But it's nearly over now, and now I'm easy

She left me with two sons and a daughter  
On a bone-dry farm whose soil cried out for water  
So my care was rough and ready, but they grew up fine and steady  
But it's nearly over now, and now I'm easy

My daughter married young, and went her own way  
My sons lie buried by the Burma Railway  
So on this land I've made me home, I've carried on alone  
But it's nearly over now, and now I'm easy

City folks these days despise the Cockie  
Say with subsidies and dole, we've had it easy  
But there's no drought or starving stock on a sewered suburban block  
But it's nearly over now, and now I'm easy

For nearly sixty years, I've been a Cockie  
Of droughts and fires and floods, I've lived through plenty  
This country's dust and mud, have seen my tears and blood  
But it's nearly over now, and now I'm easy  
And now I'm easy

## **SWIMMING TO THE OTHER SIDE (Pat Humphries)**

Lui Collins's Descant: We are living, we are dwelling, in our grand and awesome time. We can worship, we can cherish, all the ones we live beside.

Chorus:

We are living neath the Great Big Dipper We are washed by the very same rain  
We are swimming in the stream together some in power and some in pain  
We can worship this ground we walk on cherishing the beings that we live beside  
Loving spirits will live forever we're all swimming to the other side

Verse 1:

I am alone and I am searching Hungering for answers in my time  
I am balanced at the brink of wisdom I'm impatient to receive a sign  
I move forward with my senses open Imperfection will be my crime  
In humility I will listen We're all swimming to the other side

Repeat Chorus

Verse 2:

On this journey through thoughts and feeling Finding intuition, my head my heart  
I am gathering the tools together I'm preparing to do my part  
All of those who have come before me Band together to be my guide  
Loving lessons that I will follow We're all swimming to the other side

Repeat Chorus

Verse 3:

When we get there we'll discover All of the gifts we were given to share  
Have been with us since life's beginning And we never noticed they were there  
We can balance at the brink of wisdom Never recognizing that we've arrived  
Loving spirits will live together We're all swimming to the other side