

## **My Personal Life Philosophy**

Within this paper I am going to discuss my life philosophy and the values I hold dearest to me. This is how I live my life. I am not stating that what I believe is fully right but it is what I completely believe in and works for me and for the life that I live. First I will discuss my main value in my life which is Family/love and how I view people should hold their family. Next I will discuss being civil with those you interact with and the importance of it. I am also going to discuss religion/spirituality and where it stands in my life. Last I will conclude with my own thoughts on what principles I believe should guide our lives.

### **Family is Most Important and Should Always Stay That Way**

My family is the most important thing in my life. I value my family over any and everything. If I had to choose between anything and my family, my family would win hands down. I was brought up this way though from my mom, dad, grandmother, grandfather, and great-grandmother. I was lucky enough to have so many positive influences in my life to lead me to this believing.

“FAMILY SHOULD ALWAYS BE IMPORTANT, FOR THEY ARE WHO YOU BEGIN YOUR LIFE WITH AND IF YOU ARE LUCKY WHO YOU WILL END YOUR LIFE WITH. MONEY CAN ONLY MAKE YOU HAPPY FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME BUT STILL INSIDE YOU WILL LONG FOR YOUR FAMILY AND FOR LOVE BUT IF YOU HAVE FAMILY FIRST AND THEN MONEY COMES ALONG ONLY THEN WILL YOU BE HAPPY WITH MONEY, BUT GIVEN THE CHOICE BETWEEN THE TWO ALWAYS CHOOSE FAMILY AND TRUE LOVE IF YOU WANT TO STAY HAPPY OR YOU WILL FIND YOURSELF FEELING LONELY.”

*-Sherrie Hodson Stocks Russell*

This quote was said by my mother when I interviewed her asking her why she thought that I felt as strongly as I do about my family. She told me it is definitely because all the love and importance we have put into our family. Also in losing some of the most important people in my life I realized that you have to appreciate the people in your family as long as possible because you never really know how long they will be here. In the last ten years I have personally lost my great-grandmother, grandfather, and dad and I was extremely close to all three of them. I have also lost a couple other great-grandmothers and another grandfather who

I was pretty close to as well. Losing my father is by far the hardest thing I have ever had to deal with in my life.

My father and I were always so close and never had fights or arguments but one day we had the most ridiculous argument and didn't talk for a whole week (which we didn't ever do but I wasn't living at home so I only seen him one time but still I never called to apologize and neither did he) then exactly one week after our argument I got a phone call from my mother telling me that they were rushing my father to the hospital and that they thought he was having a heart attack. Immediately I started to think the worst, what if he dies. I caught myself pleading with God, "Please don't let my dad die, God, please." When I arrived to the hospital I was one of the first to get there, shortly after my mom came in as well, they took us to the chapel and told us that my dad did not make it. I could feel myself fall apart at that moment. How could this happen? I didn't even get to tell him I loved him one last time or even get to tell him how sorry I was for being so stubborn and for what happened. I never got to tell him how important he is to me and I can only hope that he does truly know just how much. From that point on I promised myself that no matter what my family will come first in my life. I will never ever put anything in before them, I will let them know daily how much I really love them and I will try to tell them how much I truly appreciate them.

It is true, what my mother said. Family should always be the most important value that you have in your life. Without them you would be lonely, and it is who you share your life with. If you look at society now days, you will notice that the people that are not happy at home with their families are generally not happy in any other part of their life. Most people that are having troubles at home will have troubles at work or in their career, it seems to me a fact of life.

*"THE STRENGTH OF A NATION DERIVES FROM THE INTEGRITY OF THE HOME."* -Confucius

*"A MAN TRAVELS THE WORLD OVER IN SEARCH FOR WHAT HE NEEDS, AND RETURNS HOME TO FIND IT."* -George Moore

*"A HAPPY FAMILY IS BUT AN EARLIER HEAVEN."* -John Bowring

Treat every day with your family as if there were no tomorrow, you never know when it will be the last. I always valued my family but not the way I do today. Don't learn the hard way

like I did. Value your family first and work on the other things while doing so, just don't ever lose focus of the most precious part of your life or you will experience hurt that you have never felt before and don't ever want to feel. Yes when you lose someone that you are close with it will always bring hurt and sorrow but not like the guilt you have when you lose someone wondering, what if.

### **Choosing To Be Civil**

*"THREE THINGS IN HUMAN LIFE ARE IMPORTANT: THE FIRST IS TO BE KIND. THE SECOND IS TO BE KIND. THE THIRD IS TO BE KIND."* -Henry James

Civility is hard to find in our society now days. I read a book for another class I have taken called Choosing Civility by P.M. Forni. The book affected me greatly. I already lead my life trying to be nice to everyone or at least I thought I did. After reading the book I realized that I needed to work on being civil to everyone just a little more than I thought I had been doing. There are so many things that you can do in your life to be civil to other people. The book I read gave 25 rules to being civil. I will list a few of them and briefly explain them.

*"EVERY ACTION DONE IN COMPANY, OUGHT TO BE WITH SOME SIGN OF RESPECT TO THOSE THAT ARE PRESENT."*

*-George Washington*

Acknowledging others is one of my favorite rules of civility. One reason that people choose not to be civil to others is because they don't know each other meaning that most of the people you come in contact with on a daily basis are strangers. Saying a simple hello or noticing someone by smiling at them as you walk by can be very simple gestures and can even make someone's day a whole lot better. We never know what others are going through. Who knows they may have just lost someone in their lives or they may just be having a bad day but acknowledging them can start to turn their day around. When we make others feel special we let them know that they are not alone in this world. This is huge!

Too often in society today are people rude or crude to each other which brings me to another rule of civility that I love and live by: Speak kindly. To speak kindly you need to be aware all the time that you are speaking to living, breathing, vulnerable human beings who have feelings. Do not discount the power of your words. Remember when speaking with someone you can potentially cause unnecessary hurt or discomfort to them so remember to use kind words and never mean or hurtful words. By speaking with kindness you will improve the lives of others around you, simple as that.

Another great rule of civility is respecting other's opinions. Respecting other's opinions is part of being respectful to others. Respect for other's opinions is not easy though. It requires self-esteem, self-control, sensitivity, tolerance, fairness, and generosity. Do not ever state that you think someone's opinion is crazy or stupid and also do not ever think that what we think must be what they think also, this is usually not the case. If you reject someone else's opinion by stating that it is wrong then you are in a sense rejecting that person and no one wants to be rejected or feel disrespected either.

A few other rules that I love are respecting other's people time and space; avoid asking personal questions, and lastly respect the environment/be kind to animals. I could go on forever about civility but really the main point is that life is much more enjoyable to be kind and think about others not just for others sake but when you are civil and kind to others your own life will become more enjoyable as well.

### **Religion and Spirituality**

So religion and spirituality is a very controversial subject in the world today. Religion is even the cause of some wars to date and people get really offended easily about religion points of view. I feel that I am very spiritual without being in a specific religious congregation. I don't actually have a general religion. I have attended a couple different churches in my life but do not consider myself a member of any specific one.

At a young age I was baptized in the Episcopal church because other members of my family were Episcopalian. To be honest, still to this day I have not really learned about the Episcopal church. I only went a couple times as a young child and never really loved the services.

Also at a young age I attended the Mormon church because at 6 years old I lived in a predominately Mormon neighborhood. I liked the services when I attended and I loved the family values that the Mormon people hold high but as I grew up most of my friends were not Mormon so I decided not to join the church. My husband is not Mormon and does not believe in any of their beliefs so I think it would be too hard for me to attend that church and I also do not believe in a few of their beliefs as well.

Recently I attended a Baptist church in my neighborhood because it was the closest church to the kind that my husband attended where he grew up in Houston, Texas. I really enjoyed it. From what I had learned while attending I loved the beliefs that they had and I loved how it made me feel to attend. I loved praying and letting God know how much I love him and appreciate everything that he has done for me and my family which brings me to discussing how I feel about God and about being spiritual.

I do not belong to a specific religion but I do believe in God. I do believe in praying all the time. I don't pray as much as I want to but I do try to pray once a day if I can. I love God and he did put us here for a reason. I believe that he is the one who blessed me with the beautiful and sweet daughters that I have in my life. I also believe that he helped bring my husband into my life. He is the one who made the decision of who would be my mother and father and he chose the best two people in the world to do so. I give thanks completely to him. Yes, I have achieved things myself in my life but only with the help of God. He has never let me down even when I think something is going wrong in my life he helps me find the good out of it and helps me turn it around somehow.

I have struggled with myself going back and forth on wanting to belong to a specific religion. After doing some soul searching I have come to the conclusion that you do not have to be religious to be spiritual.

“THE ESSENCE OF RELIGION: FEAR GOD AND OBEY GOD, THE QUINTESSANCE OF SPIRITUALITY:  
LOVE GOD AND BECOME ANOTHER GOD.”

*-Sri Chinmoy*

I don't necessarily believe religion is fearing God but this quote by Sri Chinmoy describes that it is ok to be spiritual without having religion in your life and it is possible, contrary to what most religious people think.

“SPIRITUALITY FEELS THAT ALL RELIGIONS ARE VALID; LIKE THE ANALOGY OF MANY PATHS LEADING TO THE SAME GOAL. SPIRITUALITY EMBRACES ALL THE WORLD RELIGIONS, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, IS NOT CONSTRAINED BY ANY RELIGIOUS DOGMAS OR FORMS.”

*-Tejvan Pettinger*

I am constantly evaluating my spiritual views on life and the importance of being spiritual. I am still working on my spiritual points of view and still not sure if I want to pursue a specific religion in the future. All I know is that I am happy right now where I am at in my life knowing that I am a very spiritual person, knowing that God looks out for me, praying to God on a regular basis, and knowing that God knows that I appreciate everything he does for me.

### **Principles**

I have a lot of principles that help me guide my life but there are a few specific ones that will help you to be happy and successful in life.

“DON'T BE AFRAID THAT YOUR LIFE WILL END. BE AFRAID THAT IT WILL NEVER BEGIN.”

*-Anonymous*

Live like there is no tomorrow. Like I said previously treat others and your family with the highest regard. How you treat your family and others will lead to your own happiness. I am not saying always put others first though. It is ok to think about yourself first sometimes because everyone needs to feel important and fulfilled to stay happy as well. Just don't always think of yourself first, make a conscious effort to make it even if you can. Although it is hard to feel down when helping others it is also necessary to do things for yourself as well.

I can't stress enough how important it is to live your life to the fullest and how important it is to always let your loved ones know just how much you love them. Tomorrow is not promised and always live life so there will be no regrets. Love yourself and others and you will be happy. Love is happiness and always will be. Learn to love and see just how happy you will be. Always be true to your family, spouse, everyone. Honesty is always the best policy.

Live with a good heart. Think about what's right. When you are conducting yourself in everyday life think of a bunch of strangers watching you all the time and what they would think of you and then act accordingly. Don't ever do what you wouldn't want others seeing you do because that means you are doing something immoral.

Most importantly love yourself. If you do not love yourself then you will not be able to open your heart and let others love you. Love is the greatest gift of life, always appreciate it. A life without love is lonely. Open your heart and you will find the greatest happiness.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Interview: Sherrie Hodson Stocks Russell April 2012
  1. Why is family so important and why is it so important to have a high family value?
  2. Why do you think I have such a high value in family?
  3. Who taught you that family is most important?
  4. Are you happy that family comes first before anything?
- Various authors. *Inspirational Family Quotes*. [www.abundance-and-happiness.com](http://www.abundance-and-happiness.com)
- Pettinger, T.P. *Religion V.S. Spirituality*. [www.biographyonline.net](http://www.biographyonline.net)
- No author listed. *The Dafodil Principle*. [www.behappyinlife.com](http://www.behappyinlife.com)
- Forni, P.M. 2002. *Choosing Civility*. New York, N.Y. St. Martin's Press.