



Kimo's Rules

by Shay Bintliff MD

Several years ago, a very popular tee shirt was printed in Hawaii. There were no sandy beaches, beautiful women in bikinis or exciting surf scenes. No, it was quite simply a "therapy shirt"... and it sold like hot cakes!! Kimo's Rules continues to be a very popular item, not only for the humor in some of the rules, but mainly for the wisdom so simply expressed. See if you don't agree with me. Here are Kimo's Rules:

1. Never Judge a Day by the Weather
2. The Best Things in Life aren't Things
3. Tell the Truth... There is Less to Remember
4. Speak Softly and Wear a Loud Shirt
5. Loosen Up... The Unaimed Arrow Never Misses
6. He Who Dies with the Most Toys, Still Dies
7. Age is Relative... When You're Over the Hill... You Pick up Speed
8. There are Two Ways to Get Rich... You Can Make More or You Can Require Less
9. What You Look Like Doesn't Matter... Beauty is Internal
10. No Rain... No Rainbows

Ah, such wisdom... and so little time. My family will likely never forgive me, but I started reading Kimo's Rules to my granddaughter, Ileiana, when she was five years old. When she didn't completely understand a rule, she would ask the most profound questions. Like Rule #4... she asked, "why do I have to speak softly if I have a red shirt on, Granny... maybe I want to shout... but maybe that will

scare people, yes??" And question #2, my all time favorite: "Is a hug a thing, Granny? Or like camping out with daddy on the beach, is that a thing? Cause you know, those are the best!!" Now at age 8, she constantly reminds us all to "tell the truth." and to "always look for rainbows!" We even made up a game called "Name that rule"... One of us writes down a number, and the other has to guess what rule you are thinking of. If you are wrong, you have to tell a story about that rule. WOW... have I heard some "out of the mouth of babes" stories!!!

Bringing closure to this moment of joyful sharing for me, I can sum it all up with these words: Kimo has real clarity on what is important in our lives. The "Rules" reflect what we all know about the "Aloha Spirit"... that to be generous and loving, especially with ourselves, will go a long way. Kimo's Rules are like a large dose of positive energy and thinking, the kind of focus that builds strength and resilience.

Editorial Comment:

Sharon Shay Bintliff MD, FACEP, FAAP, is Emeritus Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics at the John A. Burns School of Medicine. She still practices Emergency Medicine as the Medical Director of the Emergency Department at the Kauai Veterans Memorial Hospital on Kauai.

Dr. Bintliff presented "Kimo's Rules" at the recent Hot Spots in Dermatology 2003 on Maui. With her permission, we are presenting the Rules to readers of the Journal. She has lived in Kamuela on the Big Island for the past 10 years and continues "to have a full life canoe paddling, golfing, hiking, and working on her Sandalwood Tree Farm."

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