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I recently found out I'm going to be a father. Here are the principles I want to teach my child to live by:

Be Interested

Talent is overrated, interest is not. Interested people are prone to giving their deep attention to something to discover more about it. They ask questions, listen, & observe. They open up to the world around them. Being interested is a key to a fulfilling life.

Different is Beautiful

Growing up, I feared being different--I desperately wanted to fit in. I made bad decisions grounded in insecurity. I only realized later: being different is your edge, your ultimate competitive advantage. No one can compete with you, at being you.

Work Hard

If you want to accomplish anything in life, you have to work hard. Don't believe the hype. Hard work isn't the sexy, flashy Instagram posts saying "rise & grind." I-it's the ugly, painful effort in the dark, when no one is watching. If you want something, go get it.

Show Up in the Darkest Hour

It's easy to be there for people to celebrate their wins. It takes character to show up for them in their darkest hour. People never forget who supported them when the chips were down. Be the friend who is always there-in good times and bad.

Change Your Mind

Willingness to change one's mind is a rarity in today's society. It's great to have a strong view, but always open your mind to counterarguments. Stubborn objection to alternative perspectives stalls progress. Strive for strong opinions, weakly held.

Operate in Your Zone of Genius

Your Zone of Genius is where your interests, passions and skills align. Operating in your Zone of Genius means playing games you are uniquely well-suited to win. Once you identify it, you can stop playing *their* games and start playing *yours*.

Be Kind to Others

Kindness remains severely underrated. It fosters relationships, reduces stress and anxiety, and improves overall happiness. When you are consistently, genuinely kind, you become a magnet for the highest quality people.

Be Accountable

Life isn't fair. It's a troubling reality. But instead of wasting energy on every obstacle in your way, focus on what you can control and how you can break through the wall. Stop looking out. Look in. Own your shit.

Listen More & Argue Less

Have you noticed that the most argumentative people rarely persuade anyone? The most persuasive people don't argue; they observe, listen, and ask questions. Argue less, persuade more. Persuasion is an art that requires a paintbrush, not a sledgehammer.

Follow Your Curiosity

Humans are born with astonishing curiosity. But somewhere along the way, we're told to stop asking questions. Push back. Learn to follow your curiosity, trust it. For the curious mind, anything is possible. Fortune favors the curious.

Closed Mouths Don't Get Fed

A little push goes a long way. Don't sit back and wait for good things to happen. If you want something and you've put in the work for it--ask for it. Worst case: you're told no and nothing has changed. Best case: it's yours.