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A 21-Point Salute to Youth

Advice for Generation Two.

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I've advised generations of families for three decades. They often ask for advice for the younger generations, which we call Generation Two, or G2 for short.

Below are 21 points for advising G2. While much of the advice may be familiar, it may be helpful.

1. Thank the man, woman or employer who wouldn't date, marry or hire you. As heartbreaking as the rejection may have been, he/she knew the relationship wasn't going to work. You're fortunate not to have wasted time on people or endeavors that had no future for you.
2. Learn how to work, and teach your children how to work. Work is satisfying, while the inability to know how to work denies you the benefit of serving others.
3. Learn how to write and make a speech. You can only do either well by practicing.
4. Think before you speak. Someday, an unannounced government agent (FBI, ICE, ATF, DoJ, DoL, etc.), usually on a Sunday afternoon, will knock on your door. The agent will have questions, and you'll impulsively want to cooperate. Don't! Instead, politely thank the agent for serving our great country, and let her know you'll help after you call your lawyer.
5. Get first-class advisors. Retain a lawyer, accountant, financial advisor and insurance agent you can call.
6. Be sincerely kind to others. You may be wealthy, handsome and fortunate, but know that you're no better than somebody less handsome, less fortunate or less well off. The wheel of fortune always turns, and your position is never permanent. Be resilient when the wheel turns against you.
7. Make good decisions. One poor decision can destroy the benefits of a thousand good decisions.
8. Continue your education. You may know Excel, but Shakespeare and Hemingway know humankind.
9. Open your mind. Have a mind cultivated enough to see the world from the other person's perspective.
10. Arrive on time. Being late or ill mannered is insulting to others and reflects poorly on your parents.
11. Say please and thank you. Send thank-you notes.
12. Be extremely careful about whom you marry. It's probably the most important decision of your life and is often made when you're young, unwise (it hurts to hear, but get over it), and inexperienced.
13. Laugh at yourself. You're funny, especially if you take yourself too seriously.
14. Don't try to prove how smart you are to others. Would it seem idiotic if a center in the NBA told you he's tall? That's exactly what you do when you try to impress others with your IQ.

15. Be hungry, regardless of your ancestors' accomplishments. Know that your parents' good fortune can dampen your fire to succeed. Conversely, adversity in youth is often the motivation to climb atop the wheel of fortune.
16. Don't make wealth your primary goal. Striving for an income or balance sheet larger than your ancestors' is foolish.
17. Know that you're entitled to nothing. If your ancestors leave you \$10 and nothing else, you're \$10 ahead of where you could be.
18. Learn from your inept boss or colleagues. Learn how to be a good boss from watching your inept boss.
19. Be interested.
20. Be interesting.
21. Laugh, hug, and make others smile. Enjoy this ride without taking yourself too seriously. You never know when your ride—or the ride of those you love—will end. Start now!

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