

## The Rule of Three

Did you have a good Summer? Did you find ways to relax and experience happiness in some form? I hope so.

My happiness came this Summer when I could spend time with my grandsons and other family and friends I haven't seen in at least four years, since COVID came into our lives. In the time we've been separated, I've written emails and texts, painted pictures for them, and phoned to maintain our connection.

As Grandma, I said, "**Do good. Have fun. Make money.**" I explained, "Do good. Let your conscience be your guide. Develop and show ethical and moral fiber.

Have fun, because a life without joy isn't worth living.

Make money, because somebody has to pay the bills."

That's an example of the rule of three. Here's another one. I'm writing this on the Great Oregon Shake Out day. The instruction for this activity is "**Drop. Cover. Hold.**" Drop to the floor and get underneath a sturdy table or other structure that will protect you from falling objects or broken glass.

Cover your head to protect it from injury, either with that table or even your own arms if nothing else is available.

Hold on. Hold on for your dear, sweet life. You and I can't prevent or control bad things from happening, but we can have a prepared response to minimize harm. That's true in case of an earthquake, but it's also a larger metaphor for life.

Did you participate in the Great Oregon Shake Out by practicing how to respond to create muscle memory, conditioned response, or just an instinctive action to protect yourself? If so, great! If not, consider doing it next year.

If you're able to make good memories, live in peace with your ethical and moral compass, and enjoy adequate and stable income that provides for you and those you love, good for you!

Those are the foundational structures in creating and sustaining our community, the essential positive reality that makes life worth living, another rule of three: self, other people, and place. We live in relationship with our internal reality, participating in social relationships, and belonging to a place.

If you have all that, consider what you have that you can share. What can you give to those around you and to the place we occupy that makes for a shared positive world?

I've started a practice of asking clerks in grocery stores and coffee shops if they're going to school. Many are. I offer them a twenty-dollar bill, saying, "This is for your education fund."

If they say they're not in school, but they're saving to go to school? Again, "This is for your education fund."

If they say they're not going to school or saving to go to school, I offer them the twenty-dollar bill and say, "If I give you this money, will you start your education fund?" Small acts of kindness, offered with hope, joy, and love, looking to create a more positive world.