

Dalisa M. Baez

SWK 649

Professor [Kwi Yun](#)

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Personal Rule of Life

The purpose of this paper is write about my own personal life. As part of this assignment, I had the privilege to attend a retreat that was productive, engaging, and relaxing. During the retreat, each of the students were ask to bring a book by the name of Crafting A Rule of Life by Stephen A. Macchia. In his book, Macchia informs steps that one should take regarding discipline, practicing a healthy prayer, building relationships, and achieving success. Macchia provides useful tools as a workbook to guide us through life challenges. What I found interested about the book was when the author reported the use of an invitation that would teach individuals to better connect with God either by listening to his voice or obeying him.

To begin with, In part one of the framing your personal rule of life many of us go through difficult challenges in life but is important to trust God and give your heart to him so he is able to guide you. Don't be afraid to pray and ask the Lord what are your dreams, wishes, and hope. Macchia reports the guiding principle on **roles** which is about building healthy spiritual friendships, love, honestly, and intimacy (Maccihia 2012, p 23-25).

However, the main purpose of the role principle is to think about someone who you have encounter a conflict with and would like to repair. In my case, I play 4 roles with special people in my life. The first one is Luis who I am his girlfriend I rate our relationship a 4. I like how he sets positive affirmation towards me as and describes me as a loving person. In my life, I place a "*" symbol that represents life-giving. Followed by that, I rate my father's relationship a 5 with

a “*” symbol and I have no type of comments because my relationship with my father is strong. The next person in my life who I play a role as a daughter to my mother Coralia my relationship with my mother on a scale from 1-5 I would rate it as a 2 because there are things I would want her to work on for instance she tends to want to control the way I eat. It upsets me because she puts negative comments like saying that I am fat. The symbol I place my mother was a “-”. The last person who I tend to have a not-so-good relationship is my sister Marlene my relationship with her is a 1 I feel like I need to forgive her because while we’re young we had lots of arguments most of the time. The symbol I place to her was a “-”.

Concluding with the principle on roles, I feel that asking for serenity for a better relationship with my sister and mother would mean a lot to me. I would ask the Lord to help me understand why our relationship is not strong and asked the Lord for forgiveness and clarity.

Secondly, the next principle guideline I would like to discuss is **gifts** which mainly focus on discovering spiritual gifts, natural talents, and temperament. Macchia states “ Our gifts and talents all come from the hand of almighty God. We can’t claim them as our own, as if we created them as our own as if we created or designed them by ancestry or practice. But each of us has a responsibility to know what they are and learn into them with an earnest desire to develop them throughout our lives” (Macchia p.35). To summarize the quote stated by Macchia he outlines that God gives each person a unique gift but people should know what they are and how it can be apply to their own life. In my example, what I consider as a spiritual gifts is speaking in public about topics, ideas, or anything that has to do with having a conversation. Another type of gift I have is cooking and the idea of staying organized. Honestly, I am grateful for each of these gifts given to me by God because it makes me feel unique and valuable as a person.

Desires and **vision** are the next two types of guidelines that can be incorporated into the rule of life. For the desire guidelines, the best way to explain it is by allowing God to know what is your deepest dryness, or darkness which triggers you from moving on. Relating desires into my life I been feeling insecure to trust my guts when I find myself in a dangerous situation. There are times where I struggle to trust my guts. When I see myself in this type of scenario I usually pray to God and allow him to give me clarity and peace when I feel nervous. Followed by that there is the second guideline on vision which talks about what plans would you want God to have for you. In my opinion, several types of vision I see for myself is applying the rule of life and I would ask the Lord to help me reduce my levels of anxiety, learning how to stay focus with a specific task and learning how to manage a task one thing at a time.

In addition, two the types of guidelines mentioned above the next applicable guidelines that would continue with the rule of life is applying **the mission** concept which talks about what is an individual currently doing to pursue their vision. Well, in my case phrases that would describe my current areas of me being either at home, work, or attending church are being around people who would guide me to a right direction. Ultimately, if I was to ask God to deepen my understanding to a better personal mission statement I would ask God to help me learn new things each day and be patient to do things the right way.

Besides, part one which talked about framing your personal rule of life I connected each value to my own personal life which consists of roles, gifts, desires, vision, and desires.

Now I will present the last part which consists of forming my personal rule of life. In this part of the book, Macchia points out that **time** and space are a desperate need for us to use for specific growth and development into our spiritual lives. (Macchia p.83). With this being said setting time to the things we like to do such as praying or using the bible. For me, honestly, I do

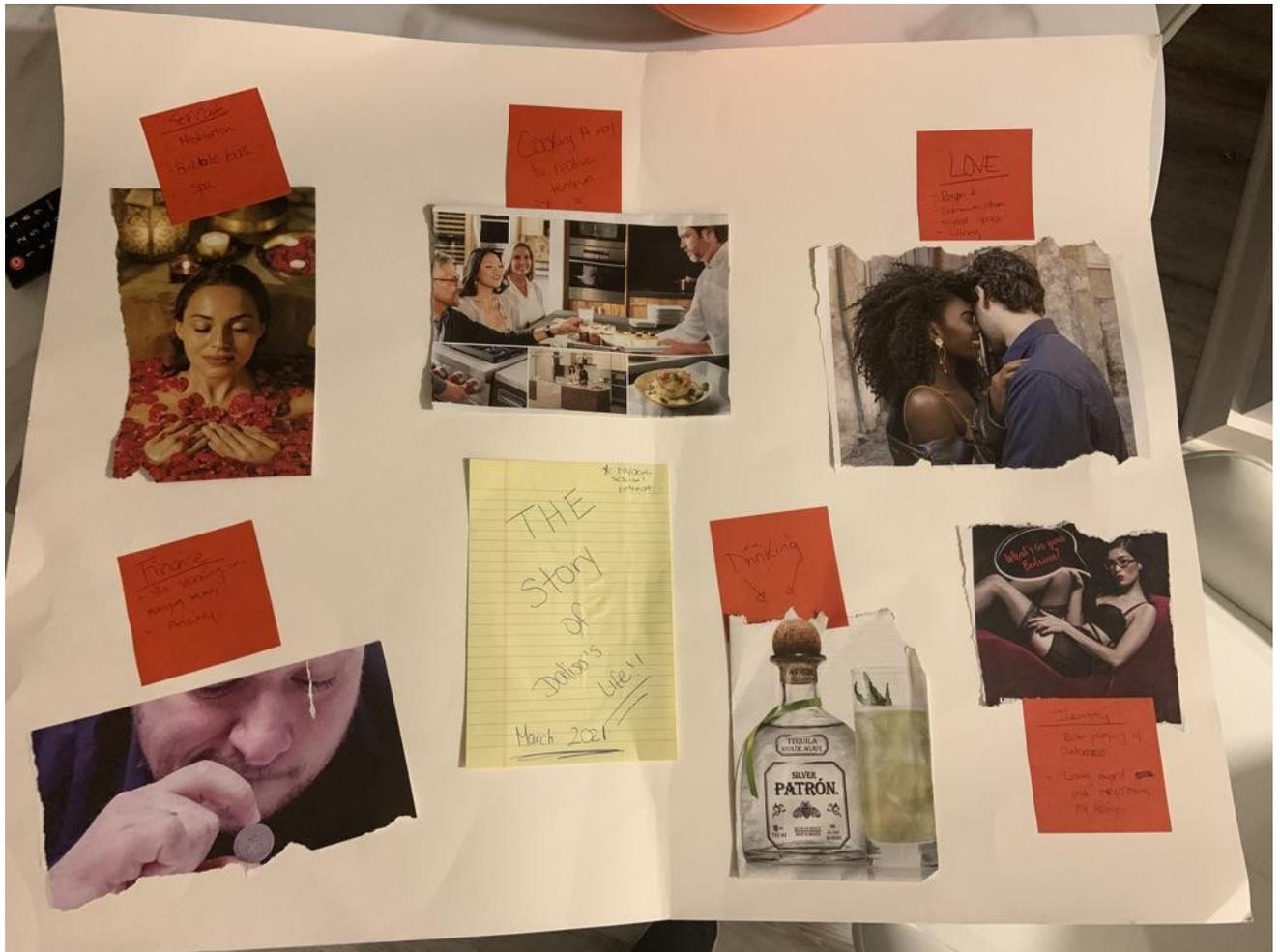
not use a bible being a catholic believer we are more of having the priest talk to us about how important is to believe in God and incorporate our faith. Beyond my personal prayer experience I do not have a resting day I tend not to take time to rest or calm down because there is a lot of things I do during the day like cooking, cleaning, working and doing H.W. which takes lots of my time to vent out and relax.

Moving on to **trust, temple, treasure and talent** which are the last part of the principle guidelines concerning to the rule of life. For me out of the four type of guidelines the two that best describe my needs are trust which sets back with the roles previously mentioned. In my part, I enjoy spending time over the phone with my parents and listening to their conversation but most importantly showing them how much they mean to me. On the emotional side I feel like I need to forgive myself and let go of my past experiences which impact me a lot when I had a break-up 9 years ago, I feel like I need to let go and move on but I am grateful to have met my current partner Luis who has been so caring, protective and supportive. On this end, this would be an example which explains the guidelines on trust and how I incorporated into my personal rule of life. The last principle guideline that I would like to say that has affected me the most in my daily life is **treasure** because I currently struggle financially when it comes to managing my money expenses. I spend lots of time shopping unnecessary things and it makes me hard to save. As I reflect to God I would ask for guidance where I am able to spend less money on necessary things.

In conclusion, Applying the rule of life, to my personal life I have learned that with the grace of God and the Lord he is there to guide me and listen to me in times of need. As a catholic believer I put my spiritual faith in his hands everytime I am in a hard situation which can vary from my body image, struggling financially and emotionally. However, applying the

rule of life has thought me to love yourself and learn how to work with things that are under lots of pressure in life to then look for pure happiness.

Below, is a picture of of the activity done at the time of the retreat.



References

Macchia, S. A. (2012). *Crafting a rule of life: An invitation to the well-ordered way*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books.