

Jules Rules #3

Sometimes there are no answers.

Often times the Pain is too real.

**Editor's Note: The rebirth of kpkronicle.com coincides with a friendship built between Ricky and I. I was inspired, like you and many others, by his wise words and his all too candid and honest open look at Life and how some of us - me specifically - were letting it pass us by without trying our best. Rick's words moved me and still do today. I owe him a lot - as I do many other friends who have helped me during the past year of depression and struggle; I thank them all. And, I thank you for reading the words I am brave enough to write again without fear of judgment; condemnation or ire. We only get one shot at this thing called Life. Live it. For it, too, shall be gone in a flash. Kp*

Ricky Johnson, Jr., is open and honest with everyone. The tragic loss of his young son, Landon, just over a year ago weighs heavy on

his mind every day. Rather than internalizing the hurt and pain, Ricky looks for ways to ease the pain of others. He has helped more than he even is aware. That was the impetus for sharing Rick's words of wisdom and hope on the kpkronicle.com. He is someone we all can look up to and see that there is a way out of the dark days.

Here's the conversation we had today:

#1 With the service today of a good friend of yours...what can you say to help them thru the immediate days following.

That is a tough one. We all deal with tragedy differently. Saying, "I know how you feel," is not true. The reality is there are some things that we will never get over, we just learn how to adjust to it. I really don't have a good answer for that question other than try your best to place your faith in God.

#2 How did the death of your son, Landon change your life.

How did my son's death change my life? Oh man, in several ways. It taught me so much about myself and life in general. I mean that is about as tough of a lesson as a person can endure. It gave me strength and it let me know I could probably make it through most anything. His death ripped my heart out but I am still on my feet. It showed me how quickly life can be taken from us and to appreciate relationships. I don't hide the fact that I could

have been a much better father to my son. I missed a lot of his life due to my selfish behavior. I struggle with that every day. His death made me want to be a better person. His passing inspired me in a way that I can't describe. I appreciate the little things now. I could have easily played the role of a victim and questioned God but that is not me. Life happens and we have to keep it moving.

3 What would you tell someone if you could if they are in a dark place and contemplating ending it.

It is not worth it. I would imagine most all of us at one time or another have thought people would be better off if we were not here. That is farthest from the truth. I believe we all have a purpose here but it is up to us to find it. With my son's decision I was just hurt and mad. I wasn't mad at him but myself. When a person makes that ultimate choice to not come back, people will carry that guilt forever as I do. I wake up every day and think of what I could have done differently with Landon. Even though my son is no longer suffering, every one who loved him is.

#4 How can the positive power of social media work for the good of everyone.

With social media we will always have the good with the bad. That is just the way society is. I don't count on social media being positive for everyone and I honestly don't worry too much about it. If I can do my part with a few words, my job is done.

#5 I know these are tough questions, but we talk often , is there anything you can say to those in need of help to reach out.

Yes. Put your pride aside and talk to someone. Change is intimidating and it is difficult to step outside of your comfort zone. There is always that thin line because no matter how much we know a person needs it, we can't make them accept it. It's sad to watch but that is the way it is. We have two choices, stay where you are at and suffer or get some help so you can enjoy your life.

#6 With the riots in Charlotte again bringing racial discord to america - what can we - you and I - do to help.

I don't speak too much on race or the riots. I try to avoid it. I have my own opinions and experiences. As far as what we can do, pray. I would advise staying away from the news media and believing everything you see or read. I keep it simple. I respect everyone the same. Respect me and I will respect you. Things are so tense now I wouldn't know what to tell someone as far as what they can do to help. I don't mean to sound cynical or cold but what goes on 800 miles away, I'm not gonna stress about. We can all be better people, period.

#7 Is there hope for those who feel they are at the bottom of the barrel - no bonus question but please share your thoughts with all of us on how to lead a healthy; balanced and loving life...

I believe if I have breath in my body, I have hope. I never use the phrase, "if I can do it you can do it." People used to tell me that and all it did was aggravate me. We all feel like what we are going through is worse than what someone else is dealing with. I can only speak for myself. I can remember when a church delivered food on my doorstep. I appreciated it but I thought to myself, "how did I get to this point." Change is never easy. It doesn't happen over night or in a month. We can't destroy our life for several years and then expect everything to turn around in the matter of a few minutes. It takes patience, consistency, and the will to want to.

~ No bonus question but please share your thoughts with all of us on how to lead a healthy; balanced and loving life...

**Ed.Note ~ Rick sent this to me. He wanted it included. I abide his wishes. The letter his son left. I was honored to be one of the first he relayed this to. We have talked almost daily since.

Landon was just a name his mother and I decided on. His middle name was Beau (Bo). I liked a college football player named Beau Morgan and I thought it sounded cool.

Ricky Johnson, Jr., is living the dream at Lake Ozark with his wife, Julie, and their mutt, Mick.

ALLRIGHTSRESERVED:KpKronicleLLC ~ Kevin Pritchett