

# Point of View by Ralph Pohlman

## Golden Years Golden Rules



I am told that in ancient China, whenever an artisan fashioned a work of art such as a tapestry or a carving, incorporated into it was a deliberate flaw. This flaw was usually hidden and difficult to find, but it was there. They did this because they feared that if they were to create a perfect work of art, the gods would become jealous and destroy them.

I sometimes tell that story to my friends whenever they may comment on some minor defect in my behaviour. My attraction to junk food, for instance, an occasional cigarette, or failure to return a borrowed book. "It's deliberate," I say, "lest the gods become jealous."

And, since life itself is an art form, it is therefore important to maintain traces of character defect, lest not only the gods but friends as well become jealous. Saints may be admirable from a distance but they're a pain to live with. Having reached that enviable state of near, but not absolute, perfection, it is now my task to tell you some of the rules of life. Here they are:

1) Newton's Law Applies. To every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Yes, I know, Newton was talking about physics, but I have observed that the law applies to behaviour as well. In

other words, there is always a price.

This is not all that profound. What it means is that you get back whatever you give out, whether it's love, pain, anger, courtesy, respect or whatever. Give it out to your friends, your family, and it will eventually come back. Sometimes, as they say, in spades.

2) Never Give Advice. There will be recurrent situations where a friend, relative, colleague, clearly needs redirection and your advice will point them to the light. Not only that but, having redirected them, their lives will be changed for the better and they will be forever grateful for your help.

I plead with you: don't do it. I'll give you examples. Once, out of concern, I gently told a friend I thought his wife had a problem with alcohol. He, in return, gently informed me it was none of my \*!@# business. On another occasion, I let a woman friend know the guy she was going out with was a rogue and a loser. For some reason, I wasn't invited to the wedding.

You may have an impulse to comment on someone's choice of clothing, body odour, hairstyle, pronunciation, political views, driving ability. Desist, I beg you. Although you may feel nobody is

thinking about you, this is a good way to change that. They will think about you, all right. They will be thinking about killing you.

3) Nothing Matters. The car won't start, you're late, your socks don't match, you forgot your sister's birthday. It doesn't matter. Stick to this philosophy and you'll add peace and serenity to your life.

You are losing your hair, your teeth, your hearing. The print is too small. You wear brown shoes with your blue suit. The grass needs cutting, the Christmas lights didn't get put up, or taken down. Your golf swing sucks, or your backhand. You haven't been to see *Titanic*. Or any other movie, for that matter, for over a year. The Time magazines are piling up, or the mail. Whatever. It doesn't matter.

4) Your Body Is Rebelling. That is called entropy which, in physics, is a measure of the unavailability of a system's energy for work. In other words, everything runs down. Even the universe, eventually.

Your skin is pocked with liver spots. You can no longer do it (with or without a partner). You are obsessed with your bowels, whose functioning you can no longer take for granted. Much of your

waking life, especially your diet of bran muffins and prunes, is built around your bowels. In fact, you have reached the age where "getting a little action" means you don't need to take a laxative.

You have noticed you're getting shorter. This is due to the wearing out of your vertebral discs. If you were to live long enough you might actually disappear.

You don't want to go out any more, even if someone gives you tickets. Faced with two temptations, you pick the one that will get you home earliest. And then there is the question of sex. If you are no longer sure what that means, you are either senile or married.

So, as I said, your body is running down. Accept it. Adapt to it. For example, never leave the house without having a pee. As Charles Schulz, the creator of Peanuts, said, "Once you are over the hill, you begin to pick up speed."

There, -that is enough wisdom for today. I know, one of my rules was Never Give Advice and I've done it anyway. But I've offered it expecting that nobody will pay attention to it. People will still advise and criticize others or worry about their golf swing. It doesn't matter.

## Markham/Stouffville Heel 'N' Wheel-A-Thon for Crohn's

by Susan Stapley  
Get ready to walk, run, roll, or stroll as Stouffville and Markham residents gear up for the annual Heel 'N' Wheel-A-Thon being held June 27, 2004 at Toogood Pond Park in Unionville.

This fun family event is held each year to raise much needed money for research into finding a cure for Inflammatory Bowel

Disease [IBD.] This is the first year that the Stouffville/Markham Chapter of the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada [CCFC] will be running their own event. They are hoping for lots of community involvement.

Several Stouffville area merchants have graciously donated prizes for the draws that will be held on the day of the event. All the

local grocery stores have also supported the event by donating certificates to purchase food items for the participants.

Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis are diseases of the digestive tract. Together they are known as inflammatory bowel disease [IBD.] IBD can affect anyone regardless of age, race or gender. Approximately

150,000 Canadians have or are affected by IBD. There is no known cause or cure.

The Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of Canada is the only national organization committed to finding the cure for IBD. It is the largest sponsor of IBD research in Canada and has invested over \$29 million in 150 research projects and initiatives. Let's help them finish the job!

Participants arrive in the morning for bagels and muffins and then enjoy a scenic 5km walk, run, roll or stroll through the quaint village of Unionville. Barbecue, entertainment and draw prizes will follow. Registration starts at 9 a.m., with an aerobic warm-up and official Kick-off 10:30 a.m. Excellent incentive prizes are offered for pledge earners. For those

13 or under, there are special Kids' Club prizes to earn.

For more information or to find out about volunteer opportunities call 416-920-5035 ext. 18. Please contact Susan Stapley or Carolle Pearce at Glad Park Public School [905] 642-0224 for pledge forms.

More information is also available on the www.cfc.ca website.

**PEACH TREE ORIGINALS INC.**

*Peach Tree Originals*  
"Proudly made by hand in Stouffville, Ontario"

**Step into Summer SALE**

Classic casuals & elegant wear ... personalized service that will astound you.

**FINAL DAYS!**  
**MAY 12 - 29**  
(during regular showroom hours)  
**WEDNESDAY THRU SATURDAY**  
**11 AM - 5 PM**  
\*closed Friday & Saturday of long weekends

**905-642-5059** Unit 34 - 86 Ringwood Drive • Stouffville

**New To Your Community?**

Be sure to call

**WELCOME WAGON**  
SINCE 1930

Dianne • 905-640-3521  
Karen • 905-640-1657

Our hostess will bring gifts and greetings, along with helpful community information.

**Park Drive Dental Centre**

12 Park Drive South Stouffville

Dr. Bob Bowdway introduces his Associate

**Dr. James Kim**

New Patients Welcome - Evening Appointments Available