

FAMILIAR FACES

Getting To Know... Héctor Rodríguez

Héctor Rodríguez is a humanist, author, consultant and international motivational speaker. A published author, he has dedicated his professional career to the research, and implementation of programs geared towards the primary development of individuals and family empowerment.



For the last nine years, he has been part of AVANCE-Houston, Inc., where he works with the Head Start Program Coordinators and Specialists in the planning of Parent Education and Parent Development activities.

Tell us about your first car. My first car was a red 1972 Opel Cadet which was my pride and joy for more than 10 years. It was hard to part with because of many unforgettable memories when we both "lived" together.

What's your favorite book and why? *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel García Márquez because of the magnificent and realistic description of the magical place which is Colombia. I am a true fan of other fantastic writers such as Berthol Brech, Eugene Ionesco and Edward Albee, whom I enjoy mostly for their dramatic perspective.

What do you do to relax? I enjoy listening to instrumentals and new age type of music. I am currently devoted to an inner growth project named "Experience a Rejuvenating Journey through Sound and Music" By Dr. Andrew Weil. I also enjoy listening to Kimba Arem, whose music includes piano, Celtic flutes, Tibetan and crystal bowls.

If you were King of Houston, what would you change? I would definitely change some key aspects within our educational system; prioritizing the importance of values, I sort of would go back to basics in terms of instilling respect to our teachers, elders, discipline, manners, love for learning, justice and our institutions.

Tell us about your favorite childhood memory. When I was a young boy, my father owned a chocolate factory, and when we were blessed with large orders, everyone in the family pitched in, helping in every way needed, with great enthusiasm and gratitude. That gave us children sweet lessons about solidarity, enjoying work, seeing the fruit of our labors but mainly the basics of teamwork: mutual, respectful collaboration.

Who makes you laugh? My wife who is one of the most imaginative and spontaneous people I know, my little daughter with her lively expressions and creative storytelling, and of course our little dog "Cotton" who is convinced he's my other child and behaves as such!

What are some of your pet peeves? I am deeply bothered by people who take their jobs for granted, especially in times like this; people who don't give family a priority in their lives and neglect them, and people who don't act with respect or honesty, which speaks about their lack of character.