

# PETRAEUS' RULES FOR LIVING, AMENDED EDITION

The first two General David Petraeus Rules for Living—at least as captured by his former mistress—are

1. Lead by example from the front of the formation. Take your performance personally—if you are proud to be average, so too will be your troops.
2. A leader must provide a vision—clear and achievable “big ideas” combined in a strategic concept—and communicate those ideas throughout the entire organization and to all other stakeholders.

In this, his moment of crisis, Petraeus appears to have amended those rules to “don’t make a move until your high profile reputation rehabilitator tells you to.”

He has hired Robert B. Barnett, the Washington superlawyer, to handle his future, and friends say he has not even ruled out becoming a talking head on television.

[snip]

Their house, on a verdant Arlington street of \$1 million and \$2 million homes — for security reasons, the address is listed in no public property records — is expected to be Mr. Petraeus’s center of operations at least until the first of next year, the earliest his friends say **he could venture out from the wilderness with a Barnett-approved new job or position.**

No matter. Hiding in your home until the PR hack says “jump”—even resorting to a stationary bike

when, in the past, the General made a point of running through some of the most dangerous cities in the world—can still be wedged into General David Petraeus Rules for Living. There's this:

4. There is an exception to every rule, standard operating procedure, and policy; it is up to leaders to determine when exceptions should be made and to explain why they made them.

While he's cooped up in the "wilderness" of million dollar homes in Arlington, VA, Petraeus just has to think of some reason he has made an exception to his rules about vision and leading by example.