

2021 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Children's Category – 3rd Prize]

What Is Life?

(Original)

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Life is a gift. Life is an experience. Life is an opportunity.

It is a gift and a blessing because it is a chance for me to serve others and do good things for the world. It is an experience because it gives us all a platform to grow, do great things and see the world for what it really is. It is an opportunity to discover what lies within me and in the world.

Although I am just 12-years old, I know that life shouldn't be wasted. I know that in my life, I would like to achieve my dreams. I dream of serving others, helping the environment, embracing my true divinity, and standing up for what's right.

In 2019, I experienced something which changed my life. I was in a hospital where a group of children, younger than me, were admitted. They had all been diagnosed with congenital heart disease, which meant that these children had holes in their hearts. To survive, they would need to be operated on. Without intervention they would die. These children and their families had no hope as there were no local specialists that could operate on them. They could not afford to go overseas for treatment as they could not afford such an expensive procedure. However they were saved with the help of an NGO called Sai Prema Foundation who organised for specialists to come and operate on these children for free. A new gift of life was given to these children.

Seeing what these children had gone through was a life changing experience for me. But seeing what it meant for their parents made me realise - the gift of life!

We often take everything for granted, but I believe that it is a privilege to have access to

water, food, clothing, education, healthcare, and a roof upon our head. And it is such a blessing to have a healthy, and happy body.

The trivial ups and downs shouldn't matter. Life shouldn't be wasted.

The advent of covid has taught the world a lot of things. It wasn't a long time ago when we could instantaneously do what we wanted. Many of these luxuries have been taken away from us.

Covid has taught us to cherish this gift of life. Covid is also teaching us that we can't be selfish - as individuals, as a society, as a country or as the world. Everyone on this planet is interlinked and the whole world needs to come together as one. What is important is love, compassion and gratitude. This attitude of gratitude will radiate positivity and kickstart the process of global invigoration of life.

I have realised that these cannot be mere words. So how do I plan to radiate this out to the world? By giving back in whatever way that I can. One person cannot do everything but everyone can do at least one thing. I want to help sick children. I have seen the devastation that heart disease causes in children and especially upon their parents. I want to become a Medical professional, a pediatric cardiologist with the sole aim of alleviating the suffering of poor children. Along the way, I would also like to make a difference to the rights of children and animals.

I have been taught by my parents to prove things with my actions and not to just dream or speak about it.

Four years ago, my mother inspired me to become vegetarian. She took this step and I followed because I believe everyone and everything deserves a chance to live, breathe, and be happy. Killing these beautiful animals to satisfy our needs and desires is not something I want to do. There are so many sustainable plant based alternatives which are better for us and the environment.

If everyone develops this oneness, compassion and gratitude, then there will be no wars - only peace. The world will live and cherish. The natural process of invigoration will begin with these winds of change.

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