

2021 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Youth Category – 3<sup>rd</sup> Prize]

## **What is Life?**

(Original)

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Life is your being, your existence and your will to go on. Life used to be welcomed and exciting in the good old days our parents keep talking about, but today...here in 2021, life is hard and exhausting. It is ceasing to exist. Despite the technology, despite the effort, despite everything we've done, life hasn't gotten easy. It is hanging on by a thread.

We humans took the life we've been given for granted and now we are suffering the consequences, yet no one can pinpoint a single finger and blame one entity for it. For it is we that cut the trees, pollute the waters, kill the turtles and then warm the earth with the poisonous gases from our industries. Life is fighting to survive as I write this essay, begging for awareness.

We took and took from life until it had nothing more to give, now it is payback time. We as the superior organisms, the top of the food chain we thought ourselves undefeatable yet a microscopic barely living fragment of a cell is out there taking millions of life in front of our very eyes. So where is the technology we sacrificed everything for in this time of need? Two years now we've been living our life on red notice and it has come to a point that this is no longer abnormal but a part of our everyday life. It shouldn't be like this, life shouldn't be taken for granted just because it was given to us freely.

What is life? For me, life is Earth, our home, our planet and our responsibility. If Earth doesn't exist, there would be no life. Now that very Earth is suffering due to the dire consequences of our actions but it's not too late! We can still save our life, we just need to take a stand. We must raise awareness and act on it because change can only happen if you take the initiative. So let's grab our gloves and clean our beaches, reduce, reuse and recycle. Let us substitute the single-use plastics with biodegradable instruments and sustain this earth, our life. We must reduce greenhouse gas emissions and stop burning fossil fuels.

We must invest in a sustainable future, let's educate ourselves and work on hydrogen-powered vehicles, biodiesel and smarter technology. Let's harness solar power, wind power and water power, we must use these freely given reusable resources without taking them for granted or polluting them. We got options! But no one is willing to invest or educate themselves on the matter. If we go on like this, we may not have a place to call home, a life. Instead of researching on another planet to ruin why don't we invest those billions of dollars to save the one we already have? It is not a lost cause.

If the polar bears, the penguins and the rising sea levels in the Arctic and Antarctic regions don't cause concern for you, at least think about yourself and your children's future. In five or ten years, there may not be a life for you or your child to live. Because we all know, living on mars is not an option for people barely making ends meet. Unless you and I take a stand, life will cease. Earth will die.

My voice within these words may be tiny, but I hope these words, limited to 700, transcend pages and make a difference. If Greta Thunberg can take a stand and make a thunderous wave of awareness, we too can rise higher and not just protest but actually, make a change. Because life matters, Earth matters. We need a sustainable future for life to go on. Appreciate the life you're living and please protect it. Life is worth saving so take the initiative today. Earth is life.