What is life?

(Original)

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Life seems to have no definition. It's a concept that exists but is difficult to limit to a narrow description. Some would say life is the period of time between being born and dying. Some believe that living is simply breathing and carrying out the basic functions. To me, however, life is so much more than any of that. I believe that there has to be something more involved than just breathing or moving in order to call it living. If we think about life as a dish that is bland on its own, then it is easy to see that in order to make this dish something spectacular, a spice needs to be added or some sort of secret ingredient. I believe the certain secret ingredient, which is needed to make life actual *life,* is feeling.

Feeling is what makes us different from even the most developed forms of artificial intelligence. It is the reason why a usually cold and distant person would suddenly write a love poem expressing their purest devotion to the object of their adoration. Preparing to fall asleep, we may gaze outside the window at the stars and feel amazement at their glittering beauty. Waking up in the morning, we might feel the sun's rays on our skin and feel joyful just from the warmth it provides. These little things can make us *live* if we relish the moment and appreciate it all. Although not every moment is bound to bring us happy emotions… Sometimes we want to hide behind the trustworthy door of our room, under a pile of loyal, warm blankets in the darkest corner of the room and stay there accompanied with the bitter feeling of sorrow, embarrassment, or disappointment until we are ready to face the challenging world again. Enduring, and not rejecting these feelings are part of life and allow us to emerge stronger than we were before.

A relatively calm person who rarely expressed her feelings – that's what I was – until I discovered BTS, a Korean boy band. It might seem strange to those who don't know anything about them; how could becoming a fan of a musical group change a person? Well,

it did change me and my view on life. From watching them, I saw how valuing each moment of life, even the simplest things such as seeing a pretty flower on the side of the road, without feeling embarrassed about it can help you truly *live*. So, I started externalising my emotions and channelled them into every second of the day.

I realised the importance of this especially during the period of quarantine. Now that I look back at it, I believe the quarantine period gave me a brilliant opportunity to talk with myself and understand MY SELF better. I tended to ignore my feelings of disappointment or tiredness and waited until they would just pass. However, during quarantine, I realized that I had to face them. Expressing your feelings to the ultimate when you're on your own with yourself, is the first step. I started doing whatever I felt like doing; drawing, singing, playing piano. With every LINE I drew, every SONG I sang, every NOTE I played as I stroked the piano, my passion infused my being with life. Progressively working on something gave me pleasure of seeing improvement. I didn't feel lost anymore or lonely; I found myself and a way to enjoy my day that previously seemed so terribly dull to me.

Feelings are a portal into our soul. Nothing shows what we want to say better than a genuine, joyful smile or a tear of sorrow. Often cold, calculating thinking doesn't allow us to follow our heart and express ourselves which leads to conflicts. We lie, avoid certain conversation topics, put up a fake front; all to conceal our true feelings. Why? Is lying, hiding your true self – life? No. It's not. Living *life* involves showing your real feelings; who you really are instead of being fake no matter how judgmental society can be. Not being afraid to show our emotions and who we are – that is *LIFE*.