

2021 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Youth Category – Honorable Mention]

Life means sharing

(Original)

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I am wasting my time. There is no reward for me. It is against my dignity and pride. Why should I keep bearing insult and discouragements for others care? "Get Out", "You are a scamp", "Loser", and much more. I had to experience this during my volunteer work. I was collecting clothes donation and going door to door and person to person, requesting charity. But most of the people I reached out to and the houses I went all I received was the "Shut up". I was about to lose my faith and encouragement and had decided never to volunteer again. But that day of 23rd Jan, 20 I met that girl named Zahra age around nine years.

On 23rd Jan, I went to a slum area in my city (Rawalpindi) for giving away the clothes donation I have collected. There I met Zahra. When I saw her, she was wearing a tattered dress and crying over her broken doll. I went her way and gave her a pair of clothes and said sorry for her dolly. She was a smart girl, I shared my chocolate with her, and we had an interesting conversation. She told me that she had one meal a day, and some days it even becomes rare. She said that days in summer make their slum hell, and winter becomes unbearable in torn out clothes. When I was about to leave, she hugged me and said, "Thanks for being there for me". Her words reached deep down in my heart and swept away all the pain I had. Her face had happiness as she had no miseries and hardships. I returned home and shared this with my mother, and I noticed her eyes full of tears. She kissed my forehead and said, "Now you know your life's meaning". I have almost forgotten the decision of quitting volunteering. After that day, I visited her twice a week till 26th Feb, COVID-19 pandemic entered my country, and we went under lockdown. It was a blessing in disguise for the slum area as the government and many NGOs reached out there, and children there were moved to shelter houses. When lockdown lifted, I started volunteering activities again. But this time, it was different. Whenever I encountered insult and discouragement, Zahra's words acted shield for me.

I do not know who I will be today if I had not met her. Now I understand that life does not mean working 24/7/365 for stocking worldly possessions with selfishness. But life means sharing: sharing your food not only with your pet but with hungry humans too, your money with those who cannot even afford clothes, your family with an orphan child, your power to protect the weak, your support and feelings with those who disowned just because of different sexual orientation, your protection with forests and other living creatures, your scientific knowledge not for splitting the atom to create nuclear weapons but for splitting the grain, and science for protecting mother earth from global warming.

Words are easy to write, but to make them real is challenging. I aim to share my part in creating a world where children like Zahra have three meals a day, good education, neat clothes, and they have the feeling of someone cares about them and they are not forgotten. This journey of achieving my aim has a path of no end, but my single step on this path has an immense impact on some lives. I am committed to creating a team of fellows who can share their part with the world. I am a university student committed to finding such fellows, and together we will make a difference and work hard so our juniors can inherit such traits and merits. So, join me in sharing your life with others.