

Defining the Undefinable

(Original)

Nada Yousef Qashqish

(Age 21, Palestine)

It is the most challenging chess game in which all of us are naturally involved, life. We are raised wondering about life, how to live it, and how to survive it. We also keep questioning how it manipulates its devoted people. We undergo various roads in an attempt to identify and assimilate life; how to get along with it, or maybe, how to escape from it. During the longest of our journeys, we try to collect every piece of clue that may lead us to the answers to our scattered questions. Some of us may end up lost, desperate, and labeling life as rhetoric, undefinable abstract, but not me. Life is simple once we understand it.

Freedom is a complex concept; it even involves particular things beyond our thoughts. Yet, life is all about freedom, and freedom is all about life. One may wonder how to reach such a conclusion. Well, one does not come to such a realization according to a plan; it is rather by chance that one realizes this universal message. As a cancer patient, or at least, as one of those who chemotherapy had their hair exterminated, walking ability robbed, and sometimes, their hopes harshly defeated, I learned that life is all about getting to free yourself from the chains that you impose on you. I used to build bridges between me and everyone, or everything around me, even my own experiences in which I was lost either in denying them or ignoring them. However, my three-year journey with the aggressive cancer cells taught me that life gains its meaning once we break the chains and set ourselves free. Life does not build the limits that we create for ourselves; it is us. I have not believed the quote that says, "You are your only limit," till I witnessed a dozen supportive family members and friends during my chemotherapy sessions. They unconsciously were my medicine, pushing me to realize that my fears are not helpful. They uncovered the blackness, or maybe the blindness of my eyes, teaching me how the right people can foster valuable change in you. I cursed the hour when I developed such fears of people and of the unknown, which were dragging me down the darkest of caves and driving me far away from surviving. But those people saved me from drowning in a black ocean filled with ashes,

leaving me free of the chains I created for myself.

While millions of people think that life is a mystery and one of the greatest secrets of nature, I define it as the freedom of everything that holds you down. It is just to be free, free of cancer and in the best of health, free of toxicity, and to love the good for people. It is to be free of hatred, free of racism, free of occupation, free of misery and free of terrorism and evil. It is just to be free of you because they do not lie when they say that "You are your only limit." You are the only one who has the power to push yourself down. Life is a decision; it is either to be or not to be; there is no way in between. It does not matter how many years we live as long as we are free and alive because life is freedom, and freedom is life.