

IDEAS 46

**International Online Teachers Society
Debate
Educational Materials For
Advance and Upper Intermediate
Students**



**International Online Teachers Society
Publishing Committee**



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THE 46TH INTERNATIONAL ONLINE TEACHERS SOCIETY ESSAY CONTEST

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WOMEN'S ABILITY TO ENDURE PAIN

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When we talk about pain, the women have proven to have more ability to endure pain than any other people. This is very true and is really prevalent among moms. Because of the busy schedules and hectic lives of the mothers, they don't even have enough time to deal with, let alone think about chronic pain. They are so much engrossed with the whereabouts and how to take care of their family. They are oblivious of everything, even to the point of experiencing pain itself to the truest sense of it. They work very hard to raise their family. That holds true for me too.

We all know that it is not easy to be a mother, especially if she is a working or single mom! But I must say that there is one specific challenge that is a drag to a lot of mothers out there that we never talk about and that is, chronic pain. You and I will agree that most moms are too dead busy to pay attention to pain. They even hardly notice that they are already in pain because their tolerance to pain is at the highest level. A mom's only concern is if she has attended to all the needs of her family and she doesn't even bother to give a damn care to herself. That only means that her family goes first and foremost for her.

There are a lot of times that mothers wouldn't even tell anyone that she is in pain. They are too busy rearing up their kids and once their children have grown up and leave the house, that's the only time they bother to tell about the pain they experience. Then it is only through that instance that it becomes a priority. When everything else around them has been settled down, or maybe if that pain felt is getting severe, then that is the time they will muse about sharing their pain. I guess this is a real testimony of every mother's ability to endure pain.

We are talking about not only the back or hip pain but it can even be more severe than that. So, allow me to share three facts about chronic pain for mothers that I have read. First, pain is, more often than not, a sign that muscles are unbalanced, whether from activity, inactivity or from a traumatic event. Actually, giving birth qualifies as traumatic. Second, if pain has been felt and left long enough, imbalances can severely affect your ability to function in your daily life. Lastly, one must not be adamant to pain for it's not about how old you are and whatever age you maybe, that you should address these muscle imbalances. Have in mind that when you experience it, you should get rid of the pain that you've felt.

Don't let pain be a fiasco but instead one should try to learn a few stretches to help rebalance your hip or back muscles or whatever part maybe affected so as to help take away the pain felt. For mothers like me, who have the ability to endure pain, let us deal and treat the pain that has been an earmark for moms in this world.

Questions for discussion:

1. Do you have that ability to endure pain which often leaves you to discard the pain that you feel? Why?
2. Are you often exposed to pain that is why you are less affected of it most of the time? Explain your answer.
3. As a woman, do you believe that you can withstand all the pain that you encounter giving you the ability to endure? Justify your answer.
4. Does enduring pain become more a nuisance rather than ability for you? Why or why not?
5. Cite or share your experience when you had that ability to endure pain most.



SOME COMMON UNCOMMON ABILITIES

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In our day-to-day existence and interactions, we often get to experience both our inherent abilities and the not-so-common ones that just come as needed.

Teachers are required to have the ability to inspire their students and stimulate their interest. Many teachers have the uncommon ability to motivate learners in the study of even the most yawn-inducing subjects. Teachers also have the ability to talk in their students' sleep, jostling students awake with their "I warn you's" and a smart rap of a stick on the table. Teachers must have the ability to summon infinite patience in such cases since failure to do so could result to senseless, endless soliloquy that will eventually end with the senseless gnashing of teeth and hair pulling come grading time: How am I going to grade this student?

Some students also have the uncanny ability to keep their eyes open while stifling a yawn or sleeping inwardly. God forbid that the teacher calls them, because they'd be reduced to mumbling their way out of the question and having the teacher wonder what it was that she had asked the student in the first place. I have had such comical moments, interpolating with a student I had caught unaware and then having to give the answer in hopeless, utter defeat. Only much, much later do I realize that the student had skillfully maneuvered his/her way out of the fix I had set and made me none the wiser for it all. Many students have the ability to remember chunks of information the night before the exam, but become virtual tabula rasas at the end of the exam. Then, they have the amazing ability to justify their atrocious study habits with the reason that they are individuals who learn more from experience and perception and not by an incoherent jumble of facts and figures.

One of my own children has the ability to confound me with his answers and statements. Like one time when I asked him why his new ruler had been cut in two halves, to which he answered that he had known beforehand that it was going to be cut in two. WHAT??!! I virtually screamed. It turned out that he had used the ruler in a swordfight with his classmate and had ended up with a broken ruler. At another time, I asked him how he got green paint on his shirt, and he told me it wasn't him alone who had gotten green paint on his shirt: there were many, some, no, many of them.

We have our own abilities. How unfortunate that some of them can be maddeningly unique and mystifying at the same time.....

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What are your unusual abilities? Why do you consider them so?
2. Can you name some people who possess uncanny abilities?
3. What unusual ability do you sometimes wish you had? What makes this ability special for you?
4. What do you think incites uncanny abilities to appear? Be as specific as necessary.
5. Do uncommon abilities like being double-jointed or tongue rolling have scientific explanations? Research on these two abilities and present your findings in class.



SOME COMMON UNCOMMON ABILITIES PART II

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I sometimes wish I had the ability to multiply into several me's. You know, the type that makes one able to undergo fission, but with all faculties fully intact. That ability would enable me to serve the needs of my career and my family all at the same time. Fortunately, I have been able to learn the art of multitasking, i.e. the ability to do two tasks at the same time. But that more technically means double-tasking, doesn't it? Well, at least that still gets me to have twice covered at a single time. And the fact remains that you still have to keep alert while doing two things. Otherwise, I'd just end up with an overly soaked load of laundry and burned rice. There's definitely no fun in that!

Superheroes have amazing abilities. This has been covered in a previous essay. Fortunately, many of them still carry whatever it is that makes them ultimately human: the ability to fall in love; the ability to feel compassion; the ability to know that with great power comes great responsibility. But wait! Those are inherent anyway, so no superhero is granted their power unless they possess those abilities. Yep, even the gods have everything covered.

The ability to teleport would be nice since it would unshackle humans from the mercy of cancer-causing gas fumes. My very first concept of teleportation was from the movie "The Fly". But that gave me a rather icky idea of the whole thing. Imagine if the protagonist had been teleported with a snail or a mosquito. That would lead to an outbreak of schistosomiasis (a parasitic disease) or dengue or malaria in gigantic proportions.

Clairvoyance is the psychic ability to see clearly what cannot be seen. Telepathy is another, but it is different in that it involves transfer of information from one mind to another. However, after I had watched the horror movie "The Rite", and learned that "knowing the unknowable is a sign of demonic possession", I have never aspired to having psychic abilities of whatever sort. That was only recently, though. But get this: how many times have you hummed a song to yourself only to hear the exact same song being played seconds or minutes later? Is it just coincidence, or do many of us have psychic abilities without knowing we have them?

No matter what abilities we may have, we should never for a minute think that we are free to exploit them in an evil manner or for not-so-noble purposes. Whatever abilities we have are a gift that we need only to optimize and develop to help the greater good.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What are your thoughts on people like Nostradamus and Edgar Cayce? Have their gifts been helpful to mankind?
2. Why do most people want to exploit unusual abilities?
3. How should special abilities be managed/used?
4. Can you name other people who have unusual abilities? Be as specific as needed.
5. If you had the ability to see into the future, how would you use it to help mankind?



TURNING DISABILITIES INTO ABILITIES-A NOBLE CALLING

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My brother owns a jacket with the word DISABILITY embroidered at the back. What makes the jacket extraordinary is the way the word ABILITY has been magnified through an (embroidered) magnifying glass and the prefix "dis-" has been greatly reduced to inconsequence. Little surprise in the choice of design, since the jacket was made for physical therapists in their medical institution. Being a young physical therapist, my younger brother has had to help manage the disabilities of numerous patients, not administer massages like many people think. Such practitioners learn to transform disabilities into workable challenges for the patients they work with. I believe that's a noble calling.

Teachers have to turn their students' disabilities into skills, also. With patience, forbearance, and endless encouragement, teachers enable their students to realize their utmost potential and become the individuals that they are meant to be. A teacher needs to go beyond the apparent disability in a student to work with numbers, letters or words and work with the student to empower him to eventually gain expertise. Unless a teacher has the selfless ability to inspire learning, a student never gets adequate preparation to fully spread his wings and fly beyond his horizons. Teachers have a noble calling, too.

Wives and mothers need to have the ability to manage the household. Once a woman enters marriage, she has to be prepared to let go of the freedom to spend as she chooses because she has her family to consider as her topmost priority. Personally, the ability to budget expenses has often eluded me. These difficult times have necessitated a lot of belt-tightening in all quarters, but the desire to have my kids experience at least some form of comfortable living has also meant that the purse strings occasionally come loose and the budget goes any which way. I guess it all goes with the territory, though. What mothers can do is not to get too carried away. Money is so hard to come by these days. Motherhood is a noble calling, too.

Nurses in my country probably carry the most noble ability of all. They have the ability to render selfless service without getting paid for it. Parents of newly-licensed nurses are even more noble: they have the ability to see their kids through four years of academic life only to have them get into medical institutions that either do not pay their children enough or not pay them anything at all. Then, those noble nurses have to spend years of servitude in foreign lands, doing backbreaking work to be able to help their family back home.

Yes, the world abounds with people who work with disabilities to transform them into abilities. We can only pray that their tribes increase while their blessings pile up in heaven.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What is your true calling? Do you believe you have the ability to heed that call?
2. Do you feel satisfied with the career that you have? Why or why not?
3. What abilities do you think someone in your career should possess?
4. Were your abilities honed by study or experience? Justify your answer.
5. What other noble professions can you think of? Why do you consider them noble?



DIFFERENT STROKES FOR DIFFERENT FOLKS

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The minute an infant utters its very first word or is able to turn from prone to supine and vice versa, a first-time parent also starts monitoring and recording its many developmental milestones. That holds true with the very first baby, but eventually wanes with the later ones. I guess that sometimes, watching for the most significant milestones can get to be a bit overwhelming or immunizing. We parents can often get bewildered by the numerous responsibilities we have that we overlook the way our (many) children get from one milestone to another relatively without assistance from us.

Each of our children, whether we are aware of it or not, has their own abilities that make them unique in their own way. Where one child may have the ability to perform mathematical operations with ease, another may have the ability to pen impressive poems or stories. Where one child has the ability to observe and do exactly as he has seen, another may have the ability to learn more from experience and perception. Where one child has the ability to sing and dance along with a program on TV, another might have the ability to conceptualize a whole choreographed dance.

As parents, we are called to a noble purpose: to recognize our children's patent and latent abilities and help them to optimize their gifts. Our children, like us, have been blessed differently. But that doesn't mean they are to be left alone to discover their abilities. It is our inherent duty to encourage them with whatever needs to be done in order for them to shine as they should and become what they are meant to be. Our children's abilities might very well prove to be a conglomeration of our and our spouse's abilities. Those abilities might serve to be mirrors of our own, only magnified and made perfect by an Omnipotent power at work.

Unfortunately, there are parents who feel relatively "threatened" by their children's budding abilities. They feel that encouraging their child to explore those abilities might make them 'inadequate' in the future. On the other hand, some might see their child's ability as a way to get personal enrichment and fulfillment. How many movies have we seen about child prodigies constantly pressured and pushed to the limits of their abilities so their parents could stand to reap the praises and accolades for their 'exceptional parenting skills' and their 'remarkable guidance and supervision'?

Our children are not miniatures of ourselves. They are unique in and by themselves. Whatever abilities they possess are entirely their own. Our genes may have helped in their general composition, but they were not born to become what we endlessly plan for them to become, but as they were ultimately designed to be.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What abilities do you inherently possess? Have your parents been instrumental in discovering those abilities?
2. Give your opinions on how talented children should be brought up.
3. Discuss in class why pushing children to develop their abilities can both be beneficial and destructive.
4. What ability/ies would you like your own child to possess? Why do you consider such as special?
5. Do you believe it is relatively easy to have a gifted child? Why or why not?



THE PIECE THAT HAD TO BE WRITTEN

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As I write this, thousands (or even millions) of people around the country are glued to their social networking sites, television sets, or morning paper as they eagerly go over updates on the details pertaining to a top showbiz comedian who passed away not 24 hours ago. Before I wrote this, I too was switching between the top two TV channels in order to get a glimpse of my favorite funny man whom I practically grew up with. He was the highly versatile actor who had the ability to make generations of people break out in stitches over his incomparable adlibs and who could just as easily reduce viewers into tears with his dramatic personifications onscreen. Yes, this great man was simply the best in the entertainment industry, bar none. Many have tried but failed to even come close, save perhaps for a really small number who've genuinely imbibed this comedian's up-to-the-beat comic style that's flawless in execution. That style only comes with years of experience.

This comedian died last night at the age of 83, merely 15 days away from his next birth anniversary. How ironic that people often pass on to the next life a short time before their natal day! His passing was especially hurtful because he had made generations of people happy/happier in their darkest times and given them lots more to love about life in general. He had embodied the genuine Filipino citizen who always finds something to smile, laugh or delight about in even the most trying moments. His joie de vivre was truly infectious, permeating the living rooms and households and hearts he has touched with his unique timing and impeccable flourish for adlibbing. He was never offbeat, maybe a little tired, but never beyond grasping of a particular heartstring or a bubble of mirth. He had those incredible abilities in copious amounts because he honestly knew how a typical citizen of his country deals with the darkness: thru the powerful light that comes with reverberating laughter.

Artists come and go, but their ability to leave us in awe of their skills and talents never quite depart so easily from our hearts. This great comedian may be beyond our reach now, but the depths with which he has touched our hearts with utmost humility and perseverance remain profound. He was the country's Everyman: someone who always knew how cruel life can be, but how extremely enjoyable it ultimately is in the long run. He it is who has inspired this piece that needed to be written.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Is there a particular person you admire for their ability? Why do you admire this particular person?
2. What abilities do you have which you believe the generations after you can try to emulate?
3. What do you think makes entertainment artists incomparable?
4. Aside from show business, in what other field can we find people with great abilities? Choose one such person and be able to talk about his/her accomplishments.
5. Which person do you admire for having overcome his/her personal struggles through his special abilities? What makes this person specially influential for you?



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