



YOUR CHILDREN AND THEIR LIFE ARE NEVER YOUR OWN

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas
B.S. Medical Technology

Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself. They came through you but not from you and though they are with you yet they belong not to you. “
Khalil Gibran

Life is a constant struggle to survive. We face test after test, challenge after challenge, just to prevail with faith in our hearts and a life that we hope will be well lived. We teach our children the rudiments of life to make them stronger individuals with greater and better choices in life than we ever had. We want them to reach farther horizons in life than we have been able to reach for ourselves. We strive to give them the best despite all the struggles we have to go through. We aim to give them a life worth living.

Yet how many among us have realized that we are just passing through this realm? That our children aren't really ours, but have only been entrusted to us because of a Special Plan? We can not live our children's lives for them, much less dictate how they should live their lives on earth. We are just caretakers, not owners, of their lives.

We may not impose our will on our children. We are only supposed to guide them towards the right path. Of course, there are times when we need to demonstrate just how serious we are in our objective of helping them find the right direction in life. But let those times be points of lesson learning for us and our children. Let those moments become crucial turns of character for both our children and ourselves. Though we are parents and they are just our children, the distinction between roles does not warrant that we are always in a position to be right while our children are bound to be on the erring side. As a matter of fact, many times, our children are able to teach us a whole lot more about life than we can ever possibly imagine.

We have heard it said often by many dedicated parents: MY CHILDREN ARE MY LIFE. I have declared that so many times to so many people. The statement is perfectly true. Yet I have also come to realize that I need to have my own life. My children will grow up, find their own life paths and eventually leave me. Will my life go away then?

Parents also need to establish an identity in life that's apart from their children, just as children do not have to live in the shadow of their parents. Let's grant our children the life that they deserve so they will also bless us with a life that's worthy of all our efforts.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Explain the Khalil Gibran quote based on your own understanding.
2. Describe the distinguished roles that every parent needs to play in their children's life.
3. Talk about your life. Do you find it satisfactory? Or do you sometimes wish you were living a different life altogether?
4. What characterizes a happy life? Elaborate on your answer/s.
5. Is there someone whose life you wish to emulate? Be able to talk about this person's life in class.