

IDEAS 74

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



**International Online Teachers Society
Publishing Committee**



CONTENTS

THE 74th INTERNATIONAL ONLINE TEACHERS SOCIETY ESSAY CONTEST

LIFE I THOUGHTS ON BEING A MOTHER--AND ON LIFE I	Kathlyn Q. Barrozo I	2
LIFE I KILLING ME SOFTLY I	Kathlyn Q. Barrozo I	3
LIFE I YOUR CHILDREN AND THEIR LIFE ARE NEVER YOUR OWN I	Kathlyn Q. Barrozo I	4
LIFE I LIFE AND ITS MEANING I	Joseph Arre I	5
LIFE I A LIFE WORTH-LIVING I	Marian Baltazar I	6



THOUGHTS ON BEING A MOTHER--AND ON LIFE

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

The very first time I felt the stirrings of life within me, I felt both blest and afraid at the same time. I was afraid because at a tender young age, I was soon to become a mother. I felt blest because I believed the Lord had chosen me to fulfill a most sacred mission: that of giving life to one of his own creatures. The joys of motherhood are always beyond words, indescribably beautiful words. Seeing your baby struggling to emit its first howl outside of your womb is a sight to behold, and that first cry is sweeter than even the most profound symphony that any talented musician can ever create. Giving life to another being, watching that special creature grow, become strong and learn the rudiments of life can be a most wonderful experience.

Yes, life is difficult. It is wrought with countless challenges at each and every turn. Yet, who are we to question the intelligence that has made life possible? Life is a gift that is given to us and it is our ultimate duty to live it according to a very Divine Plan. That Divine Plan should always be our constant pursuit to find. Our mission in life is to find our purpose, not just to live wasted lives that seem to have no goals whatsoever. No matter how full of trials and tribulations life can be, we are still duty-bound to live a life worth living. We can not just destroy our lives like it was worth nothing at all.

All of us have been created to live unique lives. Making our lives beautiful in every way we can is our responsibility. There may be times that we might fail, but we are also given tools and weapons with which to repair what has been broken and to fight when the need arises. We have been wonderfully and fearfully made to be way above other creatures on this planet. It is therefore both our privilege and destiny to rule above God's creatures and to show them how we value life in whatever form. Senseless killings not just of other people but of other beings on this planet only bring certain destruction. The penalty might not be something we reap now, but it will come, one way or the other.

I may have been fearful of the consequences of my immature and foolish actions in the past. But choosing life for my unborn child then has been one of the most wonderful decisions I have made in my life. No life ever happens by accident, and I sure am glad to have been an instrument, seven times over, for God to fill the earth with his beautiful creation: LIFE!

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Define life. What is its profound meaning to you?
2. Share your thoughts on early motherhood.
3. What advice would you give to a young woman who has gotten herself pregnant?
4. Is abortion legal in your country? Under what conditions?
5. Does a mother possess the right over the life of her unborn child? Why or why not?



KILLING ME SOFTLY

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

I once saw this horrendous video of a nurse from my country who had accidentally shut off the breathing apparatus of her long term care patient. Naturally, the family of the patient was horrified and instigated legal action against the nurse. Her patient's brain ran out of oxygen and came into a more serious condition after what had happened. We can't blame the family for doing as they did since no one would ever want a family member to suffer or even die under such negligence. The patient had to suffer living life as a complete vegetable because of the nurse's irresponsible actions. I have lost track of what happened to the maligned nurse. Most likely, her own life has also taken a nosedive after the incident.

In high school, we watched a documentary on what really happens in abortion. The video, black and white and projected on a screen, was made to describe what the unborn fetus feels when it is to be subjected to such a cruel process just to snuff out its life. It was crafted in the perspective of the unborn child. I remember the fetus narrating thus: "...they would pull me and slice me into pieces and throw me away.." Those were really graphic descriptions to our very young minds then, even if the video was shown for a Pop Ed class.

Now we see images on TV, pixilated to detract from the horrendousness, of fetuses placed in shoeboxes or plastic bags and thrown in garbage piles like they were, well, garbage. One can only wonder at the heartlessness of the individuals who threw those little angels away. Those cruel people didn't even have the decency to bury the products of their evil deeds or perhaps to even say a prayer for those tiny, helpless beings' souls.

Yes, I am anti-abortion and anti-euthanasia. I am deeply affected by news items that show just how cruel or careless some people can be. Perhaps I have been lucky to have had a supportive family that has no place for taking life away, even for medical purposes. I sincerely hope my children will see just how I value life. I hope they will see just how important giving life to them has been to me, no matter how huge a mistake many others around me have perceived me to have made. I hope my own decisions will inspire them to be responsible in all their actions because life is a sacred thing. Life is a blessing, no matter how extremely difficult it can prove to be at certain points.

The very fact that we are alive is already a gift in itself. How many souls fail to be given embodiment to? How many helpless souls fail to be born because of individuals that take away their life before it even happens? How many lives are senselessly terminated just because of a careless decision or a mistake? Love the life that you live, and love the lives you give birth to and are assigned care over even more. Only then will you have learned to truly live.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What is your opinion on abortion? On euthanasia?
2. Is it easy to make life-changing decisions like going for abortion or euthanasia? Justify your answer with concrete examples.
3. How do we "kill" other people aside from actually taking their lives?
4. Is legalizing abortion the only way to control human population? Cite specific examples as needed.
5. What role/s should parents play in their own children's lives? Elaborate on your answer.



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.



Life and its meaning

Joseph Arre
Class of 2008, University of Baguio
B.S in Nursing

Life is a process of continuous movement and decisions. Everyone has a decision to make and a person's life is based on the path and the decisions he had chosen. Most people end their life sad and lonely because they had chosen the wrong path in life. Some even try to live a life filled with lies because they are afraid of their own lives. That is why most people spend most of their time in front of a television rather than enjoying the outside. It is important for us to choose the right decisions and to always be responsible for what we have chosen, we can call this accountability.

At first, our genetic makeup determines our talents and our physical attributes. Our talents and the way we look are based on the talents and the physical aspects that our parents have. We inherit their talents, their height or their physique. However, things change once we grow older. Nature is then turns to nurture and we then become the ones who choose our paths. Most of us learn new skills in schools while others learn it through peer pressure. Family members and relatives can also have a significant effect in our futures.

Life is a gift. It is the only one that has meaning and it is a blessing which is given to us. Most people only appreciate their life once they have faced an obstacle or once they have felt hardship. However, once they have appreciated their life, it is already too late. There are some people who try to dilute themselves from the truth. They try not to face life but to try to escape it. That is why most people drink and smoke. They believe that they gain artificial courage through their vices but in truth they only trick themselves into believing that they can escape their reality.

Every person has a challenge to face. Everyone has a problem to solve and a job to do. Most of us fail with our challenges while others succeed. Failure is normal and it is the only way that we can learn from our mistakes. It is important to learn from our mistakes. Never dwell in your past and never dream about the future. It is important to work hard at the present. It is also important to value every moment of life and we should never waste our time on senseless things. As Charles Darwin quotes it, a man who tries to waste his time one hour at a time has not yet discovered the value of his life. This means that a person who wastes time does not yet know the true value of his life.

Questions:

- 1) What is accountability?
- 2) Who is Charles Darwin?
- 3) Why are vices bad and why do most people do it?
- 4) How do people lie about their life?
- 5) What determines our talents and physical attributes?



A LIFE WORTH-LIVING

Marian Baltazar
Class of 1980, university of the Philippines College of Manila
AB Political Science

There are times when we stop and ponder, trying to decipher everything that we have experienced, if we are really into a life worth-living. We delve deep within our thoughts trying to reminisce all the good and not so good things that transpired in our life. Through all the good times and bad times that we've encountered, it doesn't really mean that these make us less of a person. But instead, all these mementos which transpired in our life has made us into what we are right now. They are now memories that linger in our minds and as long as we live, it can never be forgotten because it will last forever.

There are times in our life when we have done selfless deeds and we didn't even notice it. We didn't even realize that we have made a person happy and made that individual thankful for whatever we did. All of these daily countless kind actions actually make a great impact with other people too. Having true and sincere dealings with others create a good rapport. If we are honest with the people around us, then we have our fair share of making this world a better place to live in.

When we realize and make it known to our self that life is very important because it is a gift from God, then we come to know the true value of it. Life is a gift from God because of His great love for us. Life given by God to us serves as our human dignity and so we must treat each other with respect and dignity too. We were all given talents and abilities to share with the world and this is what makes our life worth-living. Life becomes meaningful when we share, interact, love and care for others.

We should handle our life with the greatest of care. It is us who will be held responsible as to whether or not we have treated our lives and the lives of others with dignity. For at the end of the line, we are all accountable to God as to how we lived our life. Whether we are at our younger years or at the prime time of our life, we should live it to the fullest and make our life worth-living. We should not take things for granted in life and not waste time effortlessly. We cannot take back the hands of time for we all pretty know about the saying that time lost is lost forever.

Take things seriously, meaning we should always make use of our time and spend it wisely. Let us see to it that we would do anything, everything in order for us to make a big difference in this world we live in. After all, at the end of the line, when our time has finally come to an end, we can say earnestly that "I have lived a good life and I am ready to go and be with my Creator." No drawing back, no second thoughts, no wasted time spent and without regrets because we have truly lived a life worth-living.

Questions for discussion:

1. Are you satisfied in living a life according to how you would like it to be? Explain your answer.
2. Will you go out of your way to fight your rights just to make your life worth-living? Why or why not?
3. Are you contented in your life right now or do you think that there are still a lot of things for you to do to make it worth living for? Justify your answer.
4. Are you living your life according to God's purpose or only according to what you think needs to be done? Elaborate on your answer.
5. Do you have any regrets at any point and time about how you lived your life for the past few years? Why or why not?



International Online Teachers Society(IOTS) is an independent non profit international organization committed to improving the state of online and offline education in the world by engaging all kinds of language teachers with fluent English speaking skill in the world to shape global, regional and education agendas.
www.iotsonline.com