

The exchange took only less than ten minutes

[Health & Medicine](#), [Hospital](#)



We do not have to be a college graduate to be knowledgeable about the world and its dealings, we just have to be street smart and keen. We do not have to be superman to possess the strengths that will be able to bring down a 20-foot building; we just have to believe that we hold the courage and the strength to deal with our daily tribulations. We do not have to be the president of the United States to have all the answers to our questions; we just have to keep on looking and never give up. We just have to feel alive.

These things I learned when I became independent. It was a rather difficult time and I was about to give up, but then I realized I have to go through this. It was one Sunday morning and I had no classes, but I was feeling rather weak so I decided to go to the nearest clinic and get myself checked up on. It was a busy day there, perhaps because most people do not have to go to work on Sundays and get him or herself checked up by the physician.

While waiting, I sat in the corridor beside this elderly woman who reminded me of my grandmother. We had a small conversation and I must admit that I had difficulties in trying to converse because English is not my native tongue, but she probably tried to understand me, and I learned more things about life that I can possibly ever learn cramped up in my small space studying.

The exchange took only less than ten minutes, for she was called in the doctor's room already, but what she told me could have changed my whole perspective in life, and it has. She told me that she grew up not knowing what she wanted out of life, that she took her life for granted and that if she could turn back time to my age, she would live. She said that she

never explored, that she was always sheltered, and that her parents always gave her what she wanted, not even asking why.

She told me that she wants to cry and lecture every single adolescent that she sees because she can see how they are throwing their lives away, as if they could live it back when they wanted to. I did not know whether to start an argument with her because of this, but I just let her talk. She told me that if she could have been more independent and had not spent every single penny that was given to her; she could have been much more satisfied.

I looked at her keenly, and I noticed that she did not look shabby; in fact, she looked like someone who eats three times a day and can afford to be looked at in a clinic like this. Her last statement was the one that I would never forget.

She asserted that it was not enough for us to just live, because what is the use of living when one does not feel alive. I believe that she meant that she was living her life, but she was living it aimlessly, with no direction. Perhaps it is because of the unending luxuries that were given to her that she took for granted.

Alternatively, maybe it is because of her sheltered life that she cannot think of a purpose. Nevertheless, I understood what she meant by not feeling alive. Sometimes, because I have been so busy doing my routine I have stopped feeling alive. I go to school, I attend to my work and my needs, I sleep, and I eat. I do nothing with passion, I just breathe.

Yes, it was just a few fleeting exchanges of words, but I was able to see it in her eyes the regret of not living all those years, of not being curious enough

to seek independence, of not trying to do things that one is passionate about. I want to change, I want to be spontaneous sometimes, I want to do something that I am passionate about.

I want to excel in my studies; I want to do something that I thought I would never do in a thousand years. I want to be independent and challenge myself to achieve greatness in spite and despite of the obstacles that are being thrown in front of me. I do not just want to live; I want to feel alive. And all this was inspired by a few moments that I had with this old woman in the corrid