

What does being alive mean?

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



What does being alive mean? I think being alive means going through challenging times and learning from them, maturing throughout your life time to ultimately come to terms with death. I value my family, and the time I spend here on Earth. Life is short.

We can't predict what will happen tomorrow. No one surely knows what happens after death. So, value life by enjoying your time on Earth, keep your family close, and forgive. Hamlet values the battles people experience without any hope for victory. Lance Armstrong values the battles people go through but he also sees, beauty and triumph and truth. The Federal Government values every life in dollar amounts for the stability of the economy which benefits everyone. I agree with Hamlet's weary views of the after-life. I agree with Mr. Armstrong's outlook of enjoying the struggles that life brings and ultimately benefits you. I agree with the writers of the What is Life Worth story. The writers teach us how the family of victims logical reasoning is affected by their loss of loved ones. Their pain drives them to innocently justify their greed without realizing the effect of the economic consequences that impacts us all.

Hamlet feels that life is a difficult journey and that the value of one's life comes from facing all of the hills and valleys of the journey. He values not giving up. Hamlet begins his soliloquy wondering if he should continue facing the challenges of his life or avoid them by ending his life. He has found out that his uncle killed his father and married his mother. Hamlet wants revenge but is afraid of killing his uncle, the new king. The author best shows what Hamlet is thinking by these quotes.

...to suffer

The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them?

Hamlet ponders if it's worth continuing to endure the slings and arrows, the affairs in his life that has implemented the idea of suicide. Hamlet next explains why he's thinking about to be or not to be.

To die: to sleep;
No more; and by sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd.

Hamlet is pondering if death will end all the heart-ache that he has succumb to. However, Hamlet knows that his suicide might create worse problems than he already has.

To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay there's the rub (the problem);
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil (human body),
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.

Hamlet is pondering if there is life after death. And if there is and he kills himself, will he be in trouble? His religion believed that suicide was a sin and

was punishable by being damned to hell for all eternity. Therefore, Hamlet was afraid of going to hell. Hamlet and all his friends have been through many trials and tribulations.

For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes

Hamlet's uncle murdered his father and married his mother. Hamlet is tempted to give up because of this overwhelming knowledge of this. At the end of the soliloquy, Hamlet has, because he fears the unknowns of the afterlife, decided to keep living.

The undiscovered country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?

Hamlet is so afraid of life in hell that he will not chance it. Instead, he will put up with the miseries and misfortunes in his life. Thus conscience does make cowards of us all.

Lance Armstrong, like Hamlet, feels that the value of life is in facing challenges. He compares life to riding a bike, One minute you are pedaling along a highway, and the next minute, boom, you're faced down in the dirt. Armstrong values those people who get back up and continue riding the

bike. Armstrong shows that he values getting up after a fall with his story about his cycling injuries.

Cyclists fight an ongoing war with guys in big trucks, and so many vehicles have hit me, so many times, in so many countries, I've lost count. I've learned how to take out my own stitches (paragraph 5)

I've got marbled scars on both arms and discolored marks up and down my legs (paragraph 6)

One minute you're pedaling along a highway, and the next minute, boom, you're faced-down in the dirt...all you can do is wave a fist at the disappearing taillights. (paragraph 7)

These quotations shows that he values the idea of never giving up because every obstacle in life that he has faced, Lance always picked himself backup. His battle with cancer also shows that he values trying hard even if he might not win. He had only a 40% chance of beating his cancer, yet he prevailed.

There's a puckered wound in my upper chest just above my heart, which is where the catheter was implanted. A surgical line runs from the right side of my groin into my upper thigh, where they cut out my testicle. But the real prizes are two deep half-moons in my scalp Those are the leftovers from brain surgery. (paragraph 8)

His battle with cancer shows what is important to him. Good or bad, the events in his life that he experiences are important to him. Armstrong further develops his idea that people need to try when he says, You struggle slowly

and painfully up a hill, and maybe, if you work very hard, you get to the top ahead of everybody else.

People die. And after you learn it, all other matters seem irrelevant. They just seem small. (paragraph 11)

I have a tough constitution, and my profession taught me how to compete against long odds and big obstacles. (paragraph 12)

His comparison to bike-racing to living with cancer develops his main idea that in good times and bad times we have to keep trying. Armstrong's last idea is that the struggles each of us go through can make us better people.

My illness was humbling and starkly revealing, and forced me to survey my life with an unforgiving eye. (paragraph 15)

There are two Lance Armstrongs, pre-cancer, and post. (paragraph 16)

The truth is that cancer is the best thing that ever happened to me...Why would I want to change, even for a day, the most shaping event in my life? (paragraph 17)

People live. It's an equal and opposing truth. People live, and in the most remarkable ways. When I was sick, I saw more beauty and triumph and truth in a single day than I ever did in a bike race—but they were human moments (paragraph 18)

I still don't completely understand it. (paragraph 19)

All I can do is tell you what happened. (paragraph 20)

Introducing these quotations about his weakness helped describe his main idea.

Unlike Hamlet and Lance Armstrong, the Federal Government, looking at the value of the victims of Sept. 11, focused on the monetary value of each victim. Congress created the Victim's Compensation Fund that would be a safety net for victims families, to ensure that they maintain something resembling their current standard of living. The task of deciding what each victim of 9-11 was worth was placed in the hands of Kenneth Feinberg who came up with formula that computed what each victim was worth. Each family of a victim received \$250, 000 and an additional \$50, 000 for each child of a victim for pain and suffering. Then they deduct life insurance, pension, Social Security death benefits and workers compensation. Now you have the total award the government is offering you for your loss. The government's program of compensation is equitable and swift with minimal economic consequences. however , some families of the victims thought that the amount of pain and suffering was to low.

Gerry Sweeney, whose brother died in Tower 2, Floor 105, points at Feinberg and explains why \$250, 000 is not enough for pain and suffering in the case of her now fatherless nephew. (page 23)

If your wife was brutally raped and murdered and you had to watch and listen to it happen, what would you think the right amount would be?

I just cant accept the fact that the Federal Government is saying my husband and my brother are worth nothing. (page 24)

Kenneth Feinberg decided to chose the \$250, 000 figure because thatr’s how much beneficiaries receive from the Federal Government when fire fighters and police die on the job. The amount of money for pain in suffering is fair. Letr’s be realistic you cannot put a price on human emotion, it will never be enough and the government cant just hand out money. As awful as 9-11 was, people die tragically every day and comparing deaths with other deaths is just foolish. Some families of victims thought that they could receive more money as compensation for their losses. One example is the family of Cheri Sparacio and her two-year olds. She explains why \$138, 000 dollars isnt enough. She claims, the government isnt taking any responsibility for what itr’s done... Please come and step into my shoes for a minute...I am not looking to go to Tahiti. Cheri Sparacio was upset with the amount of money her family would receive because it wasnt her ideal compensation to live comfortably. Other families had a more acceptable value placed on their lost family member. Angelar’s estimated \$444, 010 award will probably be three times the size of Cherir’s. some families will accept the governmentr’s compensation because it allows them to get on with their lives. David Gordenstein, who lost his wife in the tragic incident, says he would rather devote his life to raising his two young daughters than spend time pursuing a lawsuit. I think David makes a smart choice putting his daughters who just lost their mother first before money, they all definitely need each other more than ever.

I agree with Hamlet, Lance Armstrong, and the federal Governmentr’s ideas on the value of life. I agree with several of Hamletr’s ideas on the value of life. My first agreement is we should not kill ourselves because we really dont

know what will happen in the afterlife or if there is an afterlife, but I can't help but disagree with the fact that if you kill yourself you suffer in hell for eternity. It seems unfair to want to get away from misery only to find yourself in hell suffering even more afterwards. It seems so unfair because the punishment is so severe but I'm not saying there won't be a punishment. I agree with Hamlet that we should continue to struggle through life and fear the afterlife, it's better not to chance it. I also agree with Lance Armstrong's ideas on the value of life. I agree with Lance that you should never give up. I also agree with him that you should be thankful for the good and the bad experiences in your life. I think Lance's overall idea on why we should continue to struggle in life because by going through these hardships we learn and understand the value of life. Finally, I agree with the Victim's Compensation Fund's overall idea on a person's value. I agree that the compensation method was fair. I agree that the government isn't attempting to replace souls but to keep our country economically stable. I think our government felt obligated to compensate so they did and when they started handing out money it wasn't enough, even though it was plenty. Even if they were to compensate a million to each person, I believe it would never be enough for them because at the end of the day, their loved ones are still dead. Though it may seem harsh to some people to agree with the government's ideas of compensation, never forget to look at the bigger picture and think reasonably. How does handing out large amounts of money affect the economy (all of us)? Isn't it wrong to compare death? By asking for more money aren't they placing a price on a human life as well? Were any of these people in a reasonable state of mind at the time?