

# What is human suffering? essay sample

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Human suffering is universal and inescapable. When there is joy, there is pain waiting to happen. When there is pain, an individual always tries to escape it. Humans are faced with hardships in life, and along with those hardships come emotional distress and pain. Humans attempt to understand the reasoning for suffering, the inflicting pain and stress that they have to endure. Humans cannot resolve their own problems, they turn to God or another form of religion to answer questions about the imperfections of life. The complexity of human suffering is hard to grasp because of its infinite forms, which makes it difficult to escape from.

Although humans suffer regardless of their age, race, or gender, they suffer in different ways. Some people have to suffer more than the others, which make humans question the dissatisfaction and unfairness of life. Harold Kushner's son, Aaron, was diagnosed with progeria in his infancy, aging rapidly and dying at an early age (Kushner 452-53). Of all the other babies, Aaron was the baby chosen by fate to suffer a deadly illness. The chance of getting this disease is so rare that Kushner's son's illness seemed unfair to his family. Kushner cries, " On what grounds did Aaron have to suffer? He was an innocent child. Why should he be condemned to grow into adolescence . It simply didn't make sense" (453). Kushner exclaims that his son was mistreated and obstruction of the progeria disease had not allowed Aaron to grow up as a normal child, taking him away from his family.

Kushner questions why Aaron had to be the one forced to endure the pain and suffering. Gilman states, " The classic explanation for suffering throughout the Bible-with the notable exception of the Book of Job and some of the Psalms-is that it is God's punishment for the sins of the community"

(Gilman 189-90). The Bible also says that, “ if we obey God, we will be blessed; if we rebel, we will be punished by all kinds of suffering. ” (Gilman 190). Aaron was an innocent child cursed with an unfair life. Sickness and death lurks and decapitate someone unexpectedly, “... particularly among the young,” and as a result “...[humans] respond in terror, anger, and fear” (Gomes 401). The wrath of anger, fiery, and pain one feels is an emotional distress one has for the lost of a loved one. The presence of sickness and death angers one to question its existence, and its ability to inflict pain and suffering physically and mentally.

No matter how hard humans try to make themselves happy, they still suffer because they have desires in life. According to Walpola Rahula, “ all troubles and strife in the world . . . arise out of selfish ‘ thirst’ . . . all economic, political and social problems are in this selfish ‘ thirst’ ” (Rahula 30). People are unsatisfied because they struggle to gain the luxuries in life. The Buddha says that there are “ sense-pleasures” that cause suffering. Rahula quotes, “ when you see a pleasant, charming, and a beautiful person, you like him . . . you enjoy seeing that person again and again, you derive pleasure and satisfaction from that person . When you cannot see that person, you become sad, you may become unreasonable and unbalanced, you may even behave foolishly” (Rahula 18). Humans have the urge to search for happiness and posterity life. If one is unable to attain happiness in life, his or her anxiety will drive them to act selfishly; they want other people to feel their pain so they hurt a person through verbal or physical abuse. One’s emotional pain is a form of suffering, where it is unavoidable and exists. Suffering then is like a virus, infecting and spreading from one person to

another. To understand that along with the pleasures in life, there is always a negative stimulus behind it that can cause an individual to act vile.

Human suffering can be degrading. When one has to suffer because one is unable to attain what he or she wants, one would act selfishly as though they have no moral values that they have to accept life as it is and try to work with it rather than to fight with it. Not all humans act selfishly. Some attempt to understand and cope with the problems they face in life. In making a point, Peter Gomes quotes, “[humans] scattered again, as we always do, back to the demands and diversions of this troublous life, pondering the meaning of suffering, the purpose of life and trying to make sense of it all” (Gomes 401). As an individual, one tries to unlock the mystery of life, attempting to understand why it functions as it does. The more one is able to understand the meaning of life, they would be able to adapt to the misfortunes of life. Walpola Rahula states in “The Four Noble Truths” that humans “must take account of the pleasures of life as well as of its pains and sorrows, and also of freedom from them in order to understand life completely and objectively.

Only then is true liberation possible” (Rahula 19). One must understand all phases of suffering, appreciating the unfairness of life in order to attain serenity, and the value of life. As Gomes put it, “it is not how long you live, but how well you live with what you have . . . ” (Gomes 401). The choices that a person makes in life affect themselves, accepting the consequences of those choices that he/she makes. It is the individual that only knows what is best for him or her, knowing how to structure their life. When fate does not allow one to make certain choices or enjoy certain things in life, people find <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-human-suffering-essay-sample/>

alternatives to their problems. Like Kuser, who did not choose for his son to die or suffer a deadly disease; it was fate that took Aaron away.

Kushner knew he had no power to stop Aaron's death, and the only thing he could do was to give Aaron his unconditional love, and enjoy as much happiness while his child was still alive. Instead of looking at life with a pessimistic view, humans should have a positive outlook instead. People can take the negative problems in life and fix them with help of others.

Individuals should consider there are ways to alleviate a problem if not solved. When one is able to cope with the problems in life then suffering can be eased. Kuser says " that there are good reasons for people's suffering" (Kushner 459). Aaron's death could be a reason to encourage doctors to find a cure to the progeria disease, avoiding it from happening to other babies. Kushner learns to accept and not blame God for his son's death.

Although humans have difficulty accepting death and suffering on their own, they turn to religion for guidance and encouragement during difficult times. A scholar says that " the universe is moved by powers too great and too overwhelming for man to influence, let alone control" (Neiman 442). Humans were born insecure, they need to be comforted and protected. Therefore, mortals turn to religion to beg for mercy, pleading to escape from the breath of suffering. Some people find that religion shows them how certain choices they make in life subsist consequences that come along with them. In the Biblical text, if one were to sin, such as killing someone, it is assumed he/she would be punished by the Gods.

If one was to act selfishly, then one in turn will suffer on their account of mistakes based on Buddhist scriptures. Religion is like a reference guide, not to be confused with the answer to all personal problems. Seemingly, “religion is not the answer to the unknowable or the unfaceable or the undurable; religion is what we do and what we are in the face of the unknowable, the unfaceable, and the undurable” (Gomes 402). Religion can help one cope with his/her problems, showing the causes of suffering and what one can do to facilitate them. Religion can offer support but it is the individual’s responsibility to observe their own actions and resolve their own problems if needed.

People learn from their mistakes and avoid from making the same mistakes. If humans try not to make the same mistakes again, then the less pain and suffering they have to endure. In the Book of Job, God had taken everything away from Job, treated invidiously, yet Job never had sinned. Society questions Job’s suffering, why God was not sympathetic; furthermore Job did not hate God and accept that his suffering was his fate. In the end, God was impressed by Job’s loyalty and granted Job everything he once had possessed (The Book of Job 433). Job’s situation shows how life can be unfair because innocent people can suffer just as much as those who have sinned. Humans learn to overcome obstacles with problems in life, and then would that allow humans to understand life and be mature.

Life is unpredictable and death is inevitable. Humans are puzzled at the reasons for suffering and why was it meant for us to suffer. I agree with the authors that human suffering is unavoidable. There is no cure to ending suffering but there are ways to relieve the stress of suffering. I believe <https://assignbuster.com/what-is-human-suffering-essay-sample/>

suffering can be relieved if humans look at all perspectives of suffering and the cause of it. If humans know what caused them to feel pain then they should learn to avoid what it is that is making them feel bad although it be cannot escaped from it completely. A person can fall in love but when he or she has been heartbroken, one begins to suffer emotional distress and pain. Humans always need something like food, shelter, and love. Humans seem insecure because they cannot survive on their own. I can see no human suffering when an individual does not need to question the adversity of life.