

About a memorable experience



Lessons from My Extraordinary Birthday In all my life, I have faced different situations, both good and bad. The good experiences make me happy, while the bad experiences make me sad. However, all these experiences, I count them important. They have shaped me into the person I am today. From them, I have learnt important life lessons. The bad experiences have made me stronger they have proved to me that I am a strong person, as they did not break me. The good experiences are my happy moments, the ones that bring me a smile and remind me that there is still beauty in life, no matter the bad things that happen. These make me overlook the negative side of life, with all the bad experiences it presents. They always remind me that the bad experiences never last, and it is always a matter of time before I smile again. Among all the good experiences I have had, there is only one, which will remain embedded in my mind forever. This is one bittersweet, but memorable experience that has in many ways, influenced my life, especially the way I perceive the world today and the things therein.

It all started as a joke, and little did I know that this could culminate into a life-changing experience. On this warm summer afternoon, I asked my friends for their opinions about what we would do for my birthday, as the normal house parties had become monotonous, and I wanted a different experience. “ How about this time round you be the one giving out gifts? Give gifts to people on your birthday!” one of my friends suggested. “ That sounds great . . . but how?” I wondered. “ The homeless!” another friend quickly suggested. The six of us agreed to make it our project, and we started counting down days. Each person would start keeping stuff, which we would take as our gifts. Each one of us would also save little money to buy food and other stuff. With only one and a half months remaining to my

birthday, everyone was committed to playing their role. When it was only two weeks remaining, we identified the homeless people we would visit and set everything in order.

Finally, it was the eve of my birthday. I invited my friends to our house so we could set all the stuff in order in preparation for the next day. Both my friends' parents and my parents were happy with our plan and offered us a little more money and stuff to add up. When morning came, we all were happy and anticipated for the unfolding of events in that day. My mum offered to drive us to the designated place. In an hour's time, we arrived at our destination. We unpacked our luggage and went ahead to where the two homeless families were situated. On seeing us, the little children of the families ran toward us, knowing we were there for them. We offered them drinks and snacks, and chatted our way into the afternoon. They shared with us how they survived each day, and what it means to be homeless. These stories were heart breaking, and I had to restrain a sob most of the time as they narrated. After an emotional chat, we cut my birthday cake and shared with them. We then took out the stuff we had and handed them. These were mainly clothes, shoes, and food, among other many things we had bought them. We also gave them some dollars, which would cover some of their days' expenses. The two mothers were overjoyed, and they shed tears of happiness, while hugging each one of us. Their little daughters too were excited and I could read the joy in their eyes. They told us that in a long time, they have experienced again, how it feels to be loved and cared for. As we bade them goodbye, I could not stop imagining how it felt to be a mother with children, then homeless. We all drove in silence, reflecting on the experience we had just had. We reached our house and all I could do was

to thank my friends for the brilliant idea for my birthday, as I thought it was different and more fulfilling than the normal birthday parties were. As my friends left, I went to my room, sat there alone, cried, and regretted all the times I had hated my life. I hated all the times I did not feel like going to school, all the times I complained to my mum about bad-tasting food, and all the times I would make up excuses not to go out with my family. This experience taught me to appreciate my life, my family, my education, and be thankful for the small privileges in life, as not all people have the chance to enjoy this. On this day, I lay down in bed, happy that I had brightened a person's life. It was comforting to know that a homeless family would have food to eat for the next few days, and I smiled. Every time I have a feeling of negativity toward life, I open my album, glance at the photos we took on that day, and the negativity vanishes. It was two years ago, but today this experience is still fresh in my mind for how it has taught me to appreciate my life.