

Life is an attitude

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



As humans, we assign value to many things. Life, just happens to be one of those things. But not everyone sees the value of life in the same way.

The value of life comes from within each and every one of us individually. In excerpts from different viewpoints such as the contemptuous outlook on life of William Shakespeare's Hamlet, to Roger Ebert and Steve Jobs's positive outlook on life and death, audiences everywhere are shown why one should value their own life, no matter what hardships one is going through. In addition, we can come to the realization that the idea of assigning a value to someone's life from a financial standpoint is unfair because our true value lies within the relationships one develops and the legacy one leaves behind. A person's value should not be determined by material possessions, titles, social status, or any amount of money.

For decades, society has based the value of somebody's life around the amount of money that person has and how popular the person is. This is wrong, because the value of one's life should be determined by how happy they are, the experiences they've had, and the relationships they've acquired. Society has its priorities in the wrong order; we think that actors, music artists " celebrities in general " are worth more than those who have good hearts and don't make as much money. Money cannot buy happiness, so why do we as a society put very large price tags on these celebrities who are only living miserable lives and plaster false smiles on their faces when a camera is pointed in their direction?

William Shakespeare's play, Hamlet, shows us just how no amount of money in the world " or title a person holds " is capable of filling the void that is left

after the passing of a loved one. Hamlet, a young prince whose father was murdered, has a very pessimistic view on what life is worth after his father's death. In fact, he despises his life so much that he wishes he could end it. Hamlet claims life to be ...a sea of troubles... (Ln. 4), and is skeptical about continuing on living his life. William Shakespeare's work is admirable, but his central claim to be or not to be is despondent and faint-hearted. Hamlet's outlook on life is evaluated on an emotional level rather than financial, but how can somebody be content when their vision of life is completely twisted? When my grandfather was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, he didn't let the disease define who he is and what he can and cannot do. He also knew he was near his deathbed, but he did not let that stop him from getting up every morning to go work in the fields to be able to provide for my mother and her sisters. Even if he had to have somebody behind him 24/7 to make sure he didn't wander off elsewhere, he still did what he did, because he loved his family very much and knew he had to support them until the end of his days. I don't know how he managed to get out of his bed every day, but sure enough, he did. He just got up and continued with his life as if he were perfectly fine. Not once did he ever voice a complaint, and he never once let his condition run his life. My grandpa's story, as well as Jobs's and Ebertr's, are proof that even when tragic things in life happen, it isn't the end, and that your tragedies are not who you are and they should not dictate what you do and how much you are worth in this world.

From Chris Jones's interview with Roger Ebert, we come to an understanding that unlike Hamlet, Ebert views life and death in a very optimistic way despite the calamity of his life. Chris Jones, a writer for Esquire Magazine,

quotes Ebert, ...to make others less happy is a crime. To make ourselves unhappy is where all the crime starts... (Jones 34). Roger Ebert was diagnosed with thyroid cancer in 2002, which was then successfully removed through surgery. In 2003, he underwent surgery to get rid of cancer in his salivary glands. His illness was killing him, but Ebert did not let it define him. The uncertainty of Ebert's health impacts the way we see his attitude toward the value of life because it makes it seem like Roger Ebert is ready to live life to its fullest, regardless of how much time is left and his condition, and this would be apparent regardless of whether or not he beat out cancer. Surviving something like that is amazing, thus giving more meaning to living life fuller than before. Ebert continued his life as a film critic until his death. He didn't do what he did because he was forced to, but because he had a passion and truly loved what he did. The appreciation Ebert had for his life regardless of his illness and hardships he faced should get nothing but respect. It would be such a wonderful thing if we could all develop such a love and passion for something similar to Ebert's love for movies and writing. Ebert states, ...it's saving me when I am writing, my problems become invisible and I am the same person I always was... (Jones 18). I cannot express my admiration for Ebert's optimistic attitude. I truly believe that Roger Ebert has left a lasting legacy on the world, his courageous story has been imprinted into the hearts of many.

Similar to Roger Ebert, Steve Jobs is another innovative, wise man and an amazing source of positivity. Stanford University's graduating class of 2005 received such an amazing and truly inspiring speech from Steve Jobs. Steve Jobs was the chairman, chief executive officer, and co-founder of Apple Inc.

He delivered a speech based around one simple phrase, youve got to find what you love, (Par. 15).

In his speech, Jobs mentions how as soon as he began to live in fear due to his failures, he did what he could to change it right away. He obtained that personal drive within him to get him to accomplish his goals. His speech reminds us that we are capable of achieving anything we set our minds to, no matter how big, no matter how small. He encourages us to believe in ourselves and achieve wonderful things because the world will always need us. In addition, he tells the graduates about three different stories in his life, all serving as valuable lessons titled: connecting the dots, love and loss, and death. He explains to the graduating students how important it is to follow your heart and that you have to trust that eventually, things will be okay. He compares finding the right occupation to choosing a lover, As with all matters of the heart, youll know it when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on (Par. 15). It's safe to say that a majority of people aren't particularly overjoyed with their occupation; oftentimes we hear how much people hate their jobs. I think what Steve was trying to get across to those students is that you only get one chance at life, so why waste it doing something that doesn't make you happy? I learned a lot from this speech, and although I'm unsure of what the future holds for me, I am sure that everything will turn out alright. Steve Jobs has inspired so many people around the world, including myself, to chase their dreams, and if it doesn't turn out, it's not the end. You can always start over. Steve Jobs and his wise words have left a lasting impression on the

world. He stood for something so simple, that still carries such a heavy importance on our lives: being happy.

Some may argue that life is meaningless, as to why they do not value life as much as others. So what? I mean, it's true; it is hard to get excited about your day knowing that nothing really matters in the grand scheme. This also means that all those other responsibilities you are so worried about don't matter either. Nihilism is a philosophy for those who are sad, and also for those who are happy, it is a philosophical viewpoint arguing that life lacks objective meaning, purpose, or instinctive value. Basically, there is no point for anything and everything in the universe is simply coincidental. If life is meaningless, then that means that life is nothing, and nothing is something. However, it is up to each individual to define the meaning of their own lives, even if others find life to lack a purpose.

To conclude, the most important thing in this life is attitude. It's incredible how something so simple can have such a monumental impact on someone's life. To live a happy life, all you have to do is change your outlook on it, and think positively, do not focus on your financial situation or social status because the value of your life is so much more than that. If you look for the light in all situations you will find that life is a beautiful thing, and there is no time for pessimism.