

Memories
to
Remember



"Reflections on life experience"
By Students of English composition- Eng 101
Fall 2019 - Oikos University

Dear

Amie

See "

thought

Dan

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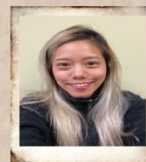
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THE TICKING LOVE CLOCK

By Eunjung Yi

At 9:00 a.m. on a Sunday, a young woman sits alone by the corner window of a small cafe. The raindrops blowing in the wind seem to flow into her heart with sad music from the cafe. She just looks at the chilling coffee cup for an hour. There are others inside the cafe who look at each other and smile and talk.

She is waiting for the boyfriend who she has been dating for three years. She recalls her past with him.



https://st4.depositphotos.com/3001967/23167/v/600/depositphotos_231672336-stock-video-sad-woman-sitting-cafe-painfully.jpg

From the day she first accepted a date with him, he tried to spend time with her every day. Then one day he made a sudden proposal to her. He proposed marriage. She was very surprised on one hand and was very happy on the other. But she was still a college student and she thought it was too early to get married. There was still a lot she wanted to do and a lot to learn. He told her all about his plans rather than trying to understand her anxiety about what kind of job she wanted. He

only talked about his thoughts and plans and how he wanted to get married soon and have children.

When she couldn't answer right away, he became angry with her and urged her to tell him why she didn't answer.

As time went by, they gradually became less able to understand each other, and they fought and quarreled. At one point he seemed to avoid meeting with her, saying that he was busy. Now she could not get rid of her ominous feeling.

Her coffee had cooled so it had no steam at all. Looking over at the window, she saw he was slowly approaching the cafe while talking on the phone. She felt a little nervous as she saw him. He approached her and smiled

"Hi, you're a little late..." she said.

"Sorry. I couldn't find a parking place," he answered her in his usual voice.

He ordered an iced coffee, and they said nothing while the coffee came out. At the moment of awkward silence, he looked at her hand and spoke quietly.

"Maybe we'll be good friends."

She said nothing after hearing him. His farewell notice was so sudden that she could not feel any emotion, and she could not even express sorrow. After a long time of silence, she looked into his eyes and said:

"Our love has gone this far. Now forever, goodbye ..."



https://cdn.pixabay.com/photo/2017/08/02/01/16/people-2569441_960_720.jpg

She walked out of the cafe, and the cloudy sky suddenly turned bright like a lie. Only her heart still seemed to have cloudy clouds and a little bit of rain falling on her eyes. She wanted to cry but could not cry, because it was a very bright sunny day and others looked like they were happy. After breaking up with him, she quietly walked along the streets during sunset. Who said that first love does not work? After this, she could not open her heart to anyone for years.

Three years later, she graduated from college, and she was walking around downtown to get somewhere. Her appearance looked lively and busy. She was walking to an internship company that had just started. The moment she was about to

enter the company building, she saw a wife pushing a stroller down the street. She froze the moment she met the husband in the eye. It was her ex-boyfriend. She couldn't do anything. Among those walking in front of her, he turned away from her face.

Another three years have passed. In front of her, there is someone who looks at her eyes lovingly and listens to her story with his hands on his chin. She fell in love again and found that new love can heal old wounds.

There was a beautiful sunset in the sky, and her watch pointed to nine o'clock. Maybe the timing is important for love to come true.



<http://sf.co.ua/13/09/wallpaper-1636252.jpg>

What time is your love clock pointing to?

~ ● ~

Important Person -- Supermom

By Mos Polpornsuang Ruangrijaroenrung

When I think about person who is the most important in my life, the superhero who comes immediately to my mind is my mom. She is a beautiful woman with black hair, big eyes, pink lips and the brightest skin that I have ever seen in my life.



Every time I look at her, she always smiles at me. Her smile is very beautiful to me and it makes me feel that she has a pure and kind heart. This is why she is a beautiful woman for me. She endured the nine months to give me a birth. She takes care me and makes me feel warm and safe.

When I face any problems, she is the first person who always helps me. My mom gave me a lesson that I will never forget. It happened when I started learning how to ride a bicycle. I tried hard to do it, but I couldn't. She saw me fail many times.

Then she gave me a sweet candy, and said:

"This is a magic candy. It can give you more power and it can help you ride a bicycle after you eat it."

I ate the candy and after that, I tried to ride again. Finally, I did it! I went back to my mom to thank her for giving me that candy.



"You don't have to say anything to me," she told me. "You have done it by your own ability. The candy I gave you was just a normal candy. I lied to you to help you not be afraid to ride."

Since then, I have had more confidence because when I'm not scared, I know I can do anything. If I didn't have her in my life, I wouldn't be who I am today. I will do the best I can do to thank her for giving me a life.

~ • ~

My Lovely Grandmother: My Teacher, Helper and Friend

By Natt Pornpimol Phasomsap



My lovely grandmother is 85 years old. She lives in Chonburi, Thailand, a small city close to Bangkok. Her name is Lum Yai. I remember when I was young, she always took care of me. She was like the best nanny, and she always stayed with me. She did the cooking, gave me showers, picked me up at school, taught me to be a good person, and she also taught me to cook.

She was the first one I called when I needed help or support. Actually, I was closer to her than my mother, and she spoiled me because I was the first granddaughter in our family.

My grandmother had a part-time job making dessert. I helped her wrap the sweets and steam them. She would take them to a cart to sell them. I recommend my favorite dessert: sweet sticky rice wrapped with a banana leaf. She made

them with old recipes from her aunt. And she had never told anyone about the secret recipes, but to anyone who helped her make the sweets, she taught every step and never skimped on the recipe.

When I had to go to the university, she would often sleep over with me in my apartment and cheer me up to study. We went shopping at the mall and bought some stuff at the market nearby my university to cook together. Most of our meals were cooked by my grandmother. I was just the helper until I graduated from the university.

When I received my diploma, I saw tears in my grandmother's eyes. She came and hugged me as tightly as she could and whispered: "I'm so proud of you to get diploma because I wanted to study too. I didn't have a chance, but you did it." That is an impression I can never forget.



~ • ~

When a Friend Becomes Like Family

By Noon Papatsara Chaipong

In kindergarten, there was a chubby girl in my classroom. Her name was "Mooky." In school, a lot of children were playing, laughing and crying. Mooky was my classmate, and we played together. During the lunch break, while other friends were eating and chatting and making a lot of noise, I taught her how to fold her tongue back in her mouth. She tried to do it again and again and then she got it. She was laughing and proud of herself and folded her tongue back all day to show other friends how to do it.

After kindergarten, she moved to another school for first grade. So, we weren't in contact with each other. We



met again in middle school. On the first day of middle school, I saw her, but I didn't think she would remember me. I recognized her because she was chubby with big eyes and dark brown hair. We didn't talk to each other because we were not in the same classroom, but when we made eye contact in the canteen, we just smiled at each other. Finally, in high school, we were in the same class and we talked more, but we weren't close friends.



When we graduated from high school, we went to the same university but took different faculties. About that time, Mooky called me and said she needed to find a roommate because she had an open room. There should be four people in a room, and one was available, So I said yes. After that we were roommates. In the university, we always spent time together and, usually hung out with other friends. We also enjoyed eating, traveling, and cooking. We were buddies. We helped each other all the time, even sad or happy.

One day we talked to each other, and we both said that our relationship was more than friends. She told me I was like a person in her family and I felt the same, because our relationship had lasted for such a long time. Now, we are still friends and she came to San Francisco in the U.S. with me, and we have now lived and stayed here together for almost four years. She is studying culinary art at Laney College and plans to open her bakery shop in the East Bay, and I will help her to build her shop.

~ • ~

What is Most Beautiful in My Life?

My Children

By Abel Jung Hwan You

If you ask me what is most beautiful in the world, my answer would be without moment hesitation: my two boys. Having children is more beautiful than any flowers on the earth, more beautiful than any sunset on earth, more beautiful than the snow covering the Himalayas.

As you know, I am the father of twin boys, Jin Ha and Seong Ha, two happy three-years old. I feel continual happiness when I see them begin to talk and walk. I feel as if I am going to up to the top of my life's happiness. Whenever I see my children growing slowly and learning like a sponge absorbing water, I feel that this is true happiness.



I was actually a beginner father when they were born. I didn't know how to hug children smaller than dolls.

Sometimes, when one of our boys cried, I really didn't know what to do. We took his temperature and looked at his body, but we had no way of knowing why he was crying. At first, I was scared and ran to the hospital, but there was nothing wrong with the child. When my wife is away, I want to cry louder than my child.

I grew up to be a true father through my twins. When I was in Korea, I worked overtime during the weekday evenings, so I only saw my children when they were sleeping. Sometimes, even if the children were awake, I would hold them for only 20 minutes. I would get tired and become like a dark cloud, so I was sorry for them. On the weekends, I could take them to the nearest forest and walk along the river.

I didn't have to prepare a big program for them, just watch to make sure there was nothing dangerous around. We could play around as much as we liked. At nature's slow speed, a child learns naturally to feel and enjoy the moment of everyday life. A father's real charm is much more in the outdoors than at home.



Look at the photographs for our two boys wearing same clothes, enjoying the sand and playing on the beach. It is funny that I did not teach them how to build in the sand and how to play on the beach. Both are similar in appearance, but they have different personalities. Sometimes, I can't tell which one is my older son. But I can feel Seong Ha, my younger son, is more sensual. Jin Ha He is also curious, so

whenever he plays in the sand, he looks around with every strong concentration. He can play and not rest for two hours.

Jin Ha also plays in the sand for two and a half hours because he has a strong competitive desire. That's why I take a break from playing with them and just watch from the side. A father has nowhere to hide because the TV always has programs about parenting to watch whenever we turn on the remote control.

In Korea, my wife is not the only one in charge of the parenting. When one of my children is sick, I cannot afford to spend my vacation relaxing. When I came to America, the first thing that I did was spend more time with them. Today, I am happier.



https://blog.bangkokair.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/shutterstock_314987561.jpg



How My Father's Illness Taught Me the Value of Self-Improvement

By Ek Natnpong Sitwaroj

"Our present state of being is a direct result of our decisions from the past."

I heard this quote when I was listening to a Thai radio station that was inspiring to me. It particularly stood out to me because it is a clear example of how accountability and personal responsibility are important to my life.

At a young age I didn't understand the weight of my decisions. Life was only about having a good time and not taking things too seriously. My dad owned a successful business, which allowed me to have a simple life and be carefree. Knowledge and self-improvement never crossed my mind, because not a lot was expected of me. I naively assumed I would always be taken care of.

That all changed when my dad fell ill, and the business started suffering. Initially I wasn't worried because I assumed that the business that my dad built would take care of us. As time went on, his condition did not improve, and medical bills were starting to pile up. This was when I felt the pressure to step up, and it was time for me to make changes. The job I had at the time didn't pay enough because it was a low-skill job. I needed to find

a new job that paid more so I could take care of myself and my family. Thus, I went on a journey to improve skills, such as learning English and computer language.

Things started to make more sense to me on the day I heard that inspiring quote on the radio. I had been reflecting a lot on personal responsibility and taking things more seriously. The quote was a good reminder to work hard because at the end of the day, every action that I do will determine my future.

The quote inspired me to establish a golden rule for my life, and this rule is this: Take 100% responsibility for your own life. To me this means I need to stop blaming others, making excuses, or complaining, because these actions show that you are allowing external influences to negatively affect you. If you take personal responsibility, success will follow you.

~ • ~

My Mom: My First Teacher and Best Friend

By Romie Anuthida Hansopa

My first love is my mom. She is the best mom in the whole world for me. She has curly hair, big eyes, tanned skin and a beautiful smile. She has a great personality

She is a kind woman, very beautiful and caring. She taught me how to treat other people with respect. For example, she taught me how to *waai*. In my culture, there is a greeting called *waai* that shows respect to other people. I have had compassion for people since I was a little girl.



When I was learning how to speak, the first word I learned from my mom was "mama." She read me the fairy tale, "Little Red Riding Hood." This story taught me I should not trust someone I don't know. Also, my mom told me significant stories about how to achieve my goals. I should go out swinging and be strong without depending on other people.



This helped me to be better in this world. So, she was my first teacher who taught me a lot of things.

She comforted me and helped me solve problems when I was in trouble. She encouraged me when I hesitated. For example, when I was young, my friends bullied me about my skin because I had dark skin then. I tried to make my skin whiter, but my mom told me that I should be proud of my tanned skin.

Now she is my best friend who supports me all the time. She is always patient and listens to me, then tells me what I have done wrong but also supports me and encourages me, so I won't give up easily. I admire her and respect her and will love my mom forever.

~ ● ~

How a Tragedy Made Us Friends Forever

By Doe Priyakorn Jaykum

We all grow up and have a lot of friends, but only a few become our best friends who always stay by our side and share our moods.

I have a best friend like that whom I really love. Her story is completely different from the stories of my other friends.

Her name is Pleum. I met Pleum for the first time when we started to study at Kasetsart University in Bangkok together.

She was living in Bangkok, but I was from Chiang Mai so she could suggest a lot of things to me. She was tough and so smart.

She loved to do outdoor activities and join community services. I was also tough and liked to do activities also, so we shared many things and

spent a lot of time together. It made us understand each other, and we become close friends easily.

At first, our friendship had some ups and downs. In our second year, we did a project in the same group but had some differences of opinion, and we misunderstood each other. Our communication broke down, and we did not talk or patch things up. Even though we did not talk anymore, we did not have a bad attitude with another and never talked behind the other's back, so I believed in my mind that we were still friends.

In the third year, one day I walked to my faculty in University. When I almost arrived at the building, I saw two dogs were fighting. I tried to stop them, but I missed, and I was bitten by a dog. It was a very serious wound in my leg and bleeding. Pleum walked past



me and saw what had happened. I didn't say anything to her, but after that she came back with other friends and took me to the hospital. We did not say anything, but I knew she was still my friend.

Time passed until we had a party on the last day of our university life. Pleum started to talk to me like nothing had happened. I was surprised at first and decided to talk with her too. Our conversation was easy and smooth. We were smiling and very happy. It kind of unlocked something in my mind, so we began to be close friends again, even though we did not talk about the past.

After we finished the university, we had different jobs but still lived in Bangkok. I worked at an Animal Hospital, and Pleum worked at the Thai Red Cross Society. They are located a little bit far apart in Bangkok, but we could meet sometime for special occasions, like dinner together on weekends or a trip out of town on holidays. So, we still kept in touch.

One day, I got terrible news: Pleum had been in a terrible car accident while she was driving back from another city. Her car was smashed, but fortunately she still alive. Her body has not much affected, but her head was hit forcefully. It gave her a serious concussion.

I waited for somebody to tell me what happened, but it happened in another city and nobody knew her there. So, the next day I drove to see her right away. It was about 300 miles away. I did everything I could for her,

including contact many organizations to help her and bring her back to the hospital in Bangkok. She was in a coma and remained unconscious for about two months. I visited her as much as I could. I kept expecting that she would get better soon.

Finally, she became conscious, but nothing was the same for her. She could not communicate with other people. She could not stand or walk or even take care of herself. She remembered only some things.

When she first came out of her coma, a lot of people visited her because they knew her from the community services and social organizations that she belonged to.

It was very good for her that everyone tried to help her to get benefits from government institutes and save her money. As time passed, people came to visit her less and less. By six months, it was only me and two other friends and her parents who came and stayed by her side to cheer her up.

At that time, Pleum was just like a child. She said everything she thought. Her emotions changed rapidly, and she got mad easily when someone displeased her, even her parents. She could not speak clearly or control her hands to do anything or her legs when she tried to walk. She had to do physical therapy and stay in hospital for a long time.

But all her memories returned, and she remembered me well. She was always very happy and kept hugging me all the time when I went to see her.

When I met her, we just talked about something simple, such as "How are you today?" or "Who came to visit you today" or "How was your physical therapy?" or "What would you like to eat next time?" I would also tell her stories about what I was doing, etc.

One day, I did not bring anything to her when I visited. I was afraid to disappoint her, so I said I was sorry. She hugged me and said:

"Don't worry about that. It's enough that you come to see me. That is the best thing for me."

I almost cried after I heard that.

After two months, her family got a terrible news again: Her father had passed away from cancer. I was pretty close with her parents, especially after her accident.

When I visited Pleum, I saw and talked with her parents a lot. This news made me so sad and depressed. I worried about Pleum and her mother.

It made me think about human life. In just one year, many things had happened to her and had changed her life forever.

A year later, she left the hospital and stayed at home with her mom while she was getting physical therapy once a week.

It is now about five years later. Pleum is still getting better gradually. She can take care of herself a little bit. She can dress herself, take a shower and walk by herself. But her mind is still like a child's. She doesn't let her

mom leave and go away from her. She can't work anymore, even though her brain still so smart. She's still very good in English so she can get some money from helping her friends translate English articles into Thai. However, she cannot work much because of the limitations of her body.

Although I'm living in San Francisco now and she lives in Bangkok, we still keep in touch by calling, texting and through Facebook. We still love and care for each other, even though our conversation at this time is pretty different from the past.

I still cheer her up to do something new and support her as much as I can. I just got good news from her: She is learning to bake cookies and if it works, she will be hired through a government institute to bake. I want to see her succeed and get the best from her life. And I always get the most love from her. Now I've learned the deeper meaning of the word "friend." Our friendship is forever.



~ • ~

My Decisions: Work, College or Travel?

By Jurny Yonghyeon Pyeon

After finishing my two years military service in Korea, I thought a lot about whether I would return to college right away or earn money by working and get new experience.

I decided to work and make money. My parents supported my decision.

I worked as a delivery assistant in a pharmacy at a hospital near my house. I went back and forth between the hospital room and the pharmacy to bring and clean up the necessary medicines, inform the nurses of the necessary supplies and assist the patients in taking medicine at their bed side. Everything was interesting and fun, but I needed more responsibility.



The nurses and doctors were able to show me what kind of work they were doing, and I found it to be a very difficult job. Compared to other jobs, I had to stay up all night taking care of patients. I was always nervous because

I didn't know when an emergency would happen. I worked in the hospital for about a year and was able to meet various people by adapting to a civilian environment that was different from the military environment.

After a one-year contract period, I had two choices again: to go back to school or to learn about new cultures by traveling with the money that I had saved from working in the hospital. I decided this time I would experience new things again.

I planned to travel to Europe by myself where I could have my own time to find out what I liked, but I couldn't decide what to do and went a bit crazy making a decision. In the end, I learned about many cultures by traveling to 22 cities in 17 European countries over four months. I learned a lot and changed into a more mature person for the future.



~ • ~

My Golden Effort was Rewarded in Kickboxing

By Luke Kyungkun Lee

Since I was young, I have been interested in martial arts. That's why I learned Taekwondo, kickboxing, judo, wrestling, jiu-jitsu.

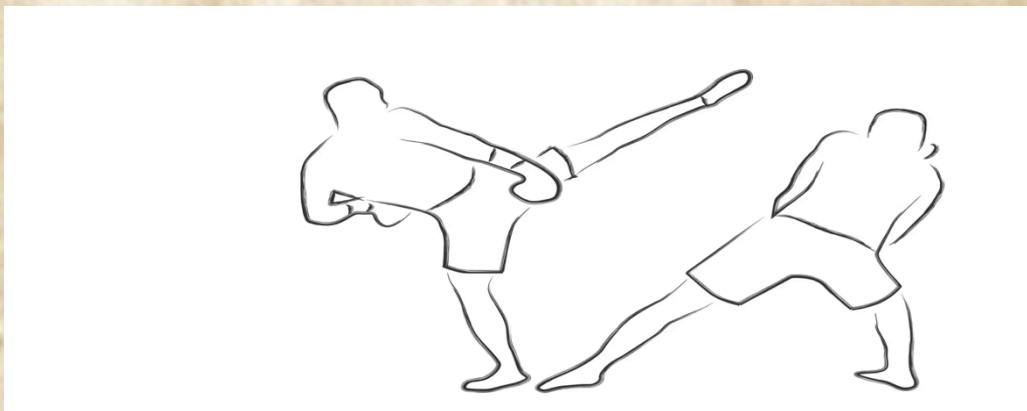
Of all of these, I spent the most time learning kickboxing. As I was learning martial arts, I wanted to play in competition.

I got the chance when I was 17 years old. For a kickboxing competition, I lost my about 24 pounds of weight, and I exercised four hours every single day. Also, I ate only chicken breasts, eggs, vegetables, and sweet potatoes for three months. I was very nervous and weak on the day of the match when I stood on the weight scale. But after I passed the weight, I could recover by eating chocolates. At the end of the tournament, after four hard times in matches, I had won a gold medal. When I

climbed to the highest rank podium, I was really proud of myself and felt great happiness. At that time, I felt like I was rewarded for my effort and all the hard times.



<https://www.unssnancymetz.fr/index.php/2019/03/14/resultats-competitions-130319/>



https://d2v9yOdukr6mq2.cloudfront.net/video/thumbnail/rUmbMsJIiqc48zz4/videoblocks-kickboxing-fighters-fighting-ink-cartoon-animation_r2grtypvqq_thumbnail-full103.png

~ ● ~

Life is Struggling

By Fay Jarinya Jaroenmueang

What makes people move from hometown to another city. How would people imagine living in America. It may be happy, exciting, sad or lonely. Who knows? But it will definitely be our new chapter of life. We will have to experience new cultures, languages, people and problems.

My name is Fay. I'm from Chiangmai, Thailand. I moved to San Francisco, USA in 2016. The reason I moved to America is to explore a new world. I chose San Francisco because my mom's friend lives here. He has been living in America for almost 20 years. He applied to the school for me and helped me find a room in a safe area. It's been 3 years already. The first year I lived in SF I was homesick and didn't feel happy with life here. I didn't call back home much because I didn't want my mom to be worried.

My life was struggling for a while. Especially when I broke up with my ex who is in Thailand. Long-distance relationship was one reason that ended our love. It was not easy at all. I felt so regret because he was only one, I could talk to and complain anything about life. And also living by myself was not easy. Sometimes I felt so lonely and had to face many problems alone. When I got sick, I didn't know how to get medicine since some medicine I need to show prescription and also, I felt too bad to go get food or medicine.

When problems came, I had to make a decision by myself. Sometimes I

made it right and wrong. I also asked myself what I want for my life and how to be happy. So, I tried to focus on things and concept of happiness. I sometimes saw other people have fancy stuff like clothes, accessories or even luxury bedroom and I wanted to have those too. So, I tried to work hard in order to make money and buy stuffs. I felt it was very hard because if I still have that thought, I will have to work and spend all of money on luxury goods and in the future I may not have money to support my family or even myself when I get old.

One day when I was laying on bed thinking about life then I realize

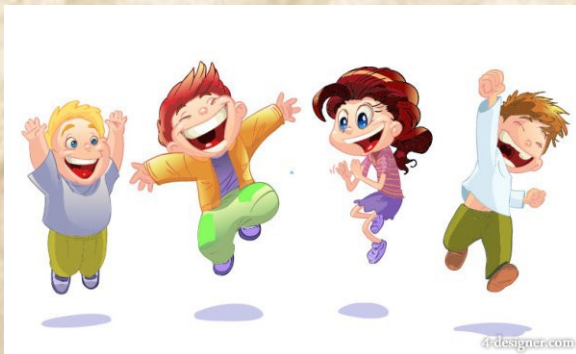


that I have to be grateful for the things I have, positive thinking changes my life. It helps me focus on what's going well so I'm less likely to feel depressed about life. And I have replaced negative thoughts with positive self-talk.

I thought to myself why can't I study in an expensive university. Why weren't I born in wealthy family. Why

did I have to pay debts that my mother owes. Why did I not win the lottery? I blamed myself and my mother for having a bad time. Once I cried because I felt so bad to myself for placing all the blame on other people which is bad. I started telling myself that I have to have confidence in myself or I can set my goals and get them done, there is nothing too hard for me. If other people can do it, I can do it too. And stop blaming people. It's not their fault. It's all about my nonsense and unreasonable thinking.

Does anybody always regret about your past life? I used to be the one who sorry about my past. For example, after I got out from the examination room, my friend and I always discussed about the answers and many times we didn't pick the correct answer and we felt regret about it. The fact is we couldn't change anything so I realized that there is nothing I can do, and I can't change the answers in the test and I also looked for something positive when facing obstacle. And think that hardship and failures are just part of life.



When we're facing problems, do our best to find the best solution. This can help us feel better in the moment and may help us grow from our experience. Moreover, I focus on what I'm doing well by giving myself compliments. When I applied for a job and they chose me. Point out my best features, celebrate my talents and recognize my accomplishments. This will help you think positively about yourself.

The most important one is stop comparing myself to other people because everyone is on their own way. And see values in ourselves. In Thailand, there is one culture which most children don't like. It is when your mother tries to compare you with other kids in your neighborhood. I'm sure that many people don't feel good to be compared. They may feel pressure and don't understand why your mother always think other kids are better. Fortunately, my mother never does that to me. Instead of comparing, she always encouraged me to do things better. Once I was deciding what university I should go. She told me that she wanted to study in Chiangmai University but she didn't have a chance so she really hoped I would pass the test and study there and finally I made it. She was so happy.

If we can do things in this list, I believe our lives will be better and when we happy I believe that we can cause people around us happy as well.

~ • ~

Pink is My SOUL

By Pinky Chalida Rikakorn

Ever since I can remember, pink has been the color that I love the most. Everything I have is all pink: clothes, shoes, bags. Even my bedroom is pink. I don't know why I like pink, but every time I am in a pink environment, it gives me an energy. In truth, pink is often used to describe a girl's characteristics.



The meaning of pink in my style is relationship and life, softness, tenderness, innocence, youthfulness, caring, sweet, kind-heart, delicate, love, friendship, charm, good health, and emotional sensitive. The power of pink helps the mind in healing, especially for people with emotional problems.



Pink color helps to calm my mind and relax. It helps stimulate feelings of love, admiration, and cherishment. The soft pink color attracts the sweetness, beauty, and unconditional love, I want the people I love to feel warmth and love when they are surround me, because I am full of the power of pink!



~ ● ~

How I Learned Nothing in Life is Certain

By Pan Warintip Patarapatipat

We might not realize how lucky we are to be alive and have what life brings us. We tend to take everything for granted. I used to hear a story, like how someone passed away at a young age from cancer or a heart attack or a serious car accident. We always hear that we should spend time with our loved ones before it's too late. When I heard too, and I thought to myself, yes, it's true. But I didn't take it seriously, really.

Three years ago, I went to the hospital for my health checkup, and they found something in my belly. A CT scan showed I had a tuberous sclerosis complex, a rare multi-system genetic disease that causes tumors, usually benign, to grow in the brain or other vital organs. For me, it happened in my kidneys and lungs. I had a tumor in my abdomen that was nine inches long and six inches wide. It blended into one of my kidneys.

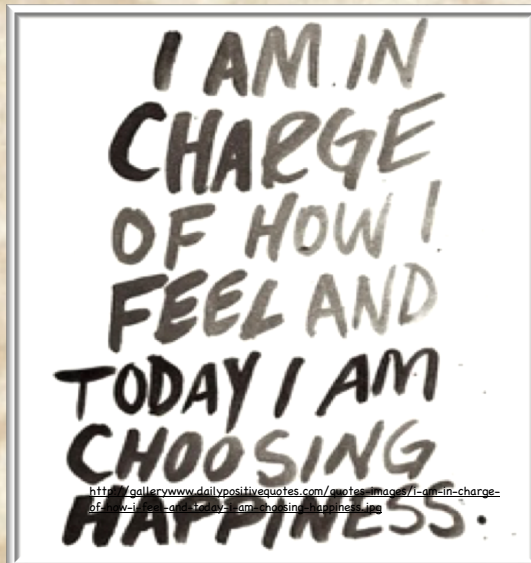
I might have had it for many years, maybe even since I was a child, but I hadn't noticed it. In my lungs, I had a lot of small cysts spreading all over

which block airways and continue to pop up. There is no cure for these cysts and tumors. Luckily, I've never had severe symptoms. The tumors could bleed, and I could have died from that, or a lung could have collapsed so I would have needed a lung transplant if the cysts had occupied all of my lung tissue.

However, I'm also unlucky because that huge tumor was attached to one of my kidneys and to remove the tumor, they had to take out one of my kidneys too. After a few months of my diagnosis, I had the operation in Bangkok. It took four hours and it went well. My family and friends were worried about the surgery, so they were there to support me.

For me, I'm not afraid of death, I'm just afraid that I'll end up unable to take care myself or unable to work. Death is far better than living with an oxygen tank or have to do dialysis every other day.

Now I have only one kidney. It has a few one-centimeter-size cysts which I have to keep checking on. It makes me feel a little bit less energy



than before. I have anemia and low blood pressure. The cysts in my lung are still there, but the doctors think they might not grow fast, and I might live a long live. Moreover, I have a long scar

Tuberous sclerosis complex (TSC) is a rare multisystem autosomal dominant genetic disease that causes non-cancerous tumors to grow in the brain and on other vital organs such as the kidneys, heart, liver, eyes, lungs and skin. A combination of symptoms may include seizures, intellectual disability, developmental delay, behavioral problems, skin abnormalities, lung disease, and kidney disease. Frequency: 7 to 12 people per 100,000.

Source: https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuberous_sclerosis

across my waist. It felt weird at first, but now I have forgotten about it. It doesn't matter to me at all. Generally, I think I'm quite in good health. I can still do my usual kickboxing exercise and live my normal life.

During my recuperation, I spent a lot of time thinking about my past. Since I was young, I have been looking after myself very well. I am disciplined with my eating plan always and try to reach for healthy options when it comes to food choices or my lifestyle in general. I always eat a lot of vegetables and fruits and avoid fat meat. I exercise, such as swimming, running and kickboxing two to four times a week. I couldn't believe I had such a detrimental disease because I



thought I was healthy. It made me realize that nothing is certain.

After the massive surgery took place, my attitude towards my life changed. I appreciate every minute of my time and my loved ones. I spent more time with them and forgive things more easily when they have done something wrong. I can let things go more easily. In doing that, I found life is full of happiness and if one day I am away from this world and die. I won't have any regrets.



<https://images.app.goo.gl/ZpxzmTJbFwrjPALR9>

~ • ~

Healing My Heart on an Unexpected Trip

By Ploy Nattaya Pongubol

Two years ago, after someone had broken my heart, I took an unexpected trip -- and I had no idea how this would change my perspective forever.

A friend had already asked me earlier if I wanted to join a trip to New York City with him, but I had said no. I didn't feel like going, because there was nothing there that I was interested in.

Then, I broke up with someone, and my heart was black and blue. I needed to escape from that feeling, so I suddenly booked a flight to New York without thinking about it and told my friend to meet me there. It was the second week of December, so there might be snow in New York, and my sister was trying to stop me. She kept saying to me:

"Aren't you afraid of the airplane landing during a snowstorm? How can you go there without planning? How can you travel alone without

speaking good English? How can a trip to New York be beautiful when it is full of snow?"

I didn't care about anything. There was nothing worse than my feelings at that time. I was thinking, even if there is snow or not in New York, I didn't expect to see anything beautiful for sure.

When the time came, I flew to New York by myself and landed at JFK airport around 10 pm. The first thing I did was look at the subway map. What a mess! I was confused, nervous but also excited all at the same time.



When I found the train, I got in and asked a nice woman, how to



transfer to go to Manhattan. She looked kind, but she walked away without saying anything. I couldn't understand why.

I kept asking people to help; some were helpful, but some were not.

One guy walked toward me and talked dirty, so I walked away in fear. Another guy came to me and asked if I



needed help, but I said no. I was scared, even though he showed a kind attitude. When I saw his gentle smile, I decided to trust him. So, I told him I was lost, and he showed me where to go next. It was almost midnight, the rain was pouring harder, and I still couldn't find my hostel where I was going to stay.

I walked around and Latino couple asked me where I was going. I showed them my destination on my cell phone, but then they did a little thing that made me smile. They raised umbrella over me while we were talking, even though my whole body was already soaking wet. They were afraid that my phone might die.

I realized that I had to pull myself together and help myself. I got lost, but finally, I got to Manhattan late, around 11.30 pm. I came out of the subway, dragging my luggage in the pouring rain. I didn't even have an umbrella.



By following their directions, finally I got to my hostel. That night, I was thinking, how crazy am I! How dare I not listen to anyone but myself!

However, on this trip, I learned to be brave, open my eyes and my heart and see lots of beautiful things. I appreciated the nice people who helped me and even understand those who weren't nice and didn't help me. You never know if they are passing through a bad time, like I was before I left on my trip.

In the morning, it was snowing, and everything became white. I smiled and was thinking: How wonderful.

~ • ~

Why I Changed My Opinion about the Homeless in San Francisco

By Pang Chutigarn Laithip

I have always felt bad about the homeless people in San Francisco. I see them when I walk down the streets, and



I always think they should not have to live like this. In downtown San Francisco, a lot of homeless people are on the street, yelling, asking for money, injecting their body and many things. In some places, there are a lot of homeless, and when I walk past them, they smell very bad.

Also, in San Francisco, I feel sorry for them. I wanted to give them some money, but I thought in my mind that they might use the money to buy drugs. That's the reason I don't give them money. If people always give them money, they will do nothing. They will wait for people to give them money or donate them any drinks or foods.

But I have always felt bad when I see them, but I didn't want them to live as homeless. I wondered: Why do

they still live on the street? They need another chance and more opportunity in their life.

Then, one day I was walking to meet my friends at a restaurant. I walked along in the sunshine and the cool wind past the crowds of people after they had finished their work. My friends were waiting for me at the restaurant.



As I was walking, SOMETHING HAPPENED!! SOMETHING WAS ON ME!! I had just walked past this homeless man sitting at the side of the street. I had looked around, had seen him and thought he looked at me strangely. Maybe five more seconds later, I felt something wet on my left hand. I was in shock for a while because I knew it was spit.

THIS HOMELESS MAN HAD SPIT AT ME!!

It was disgusting. I thought: "Where is spit from? If not anyone else, the homeless man did it."

When I looked back to the area that he had been sitting, he had disappeared. I made myself calm down. Then, I saw him when I crossed the street. He had a strange smile, like he was a tricky person. I was mad at him, but I couldn't do anything.



I texted a message to my friend: "I will arrive in 3 minutes. Can you give me some water?" When I arrived, my friends washed my hand. I was still shocked that this happened. In the restaurant, I told my friends about this, and they felt like me, very disgusted.

After this thing happened to me, what do I think of the homeless now?

It makes me feel uncomfortable when I am walking alone on the street. Now, I must be careful that the homeless might pull at my bag, phone or try to attack me.

So, I have both felt sympathetic and disgusted, but not at the same time. I have seen their aggressive behavior, like yelling and shouting. After the



homeless man spit on me, it made me feel that I should not look at them and if possible, stay away from them. Nowadays, I won't walk near them.

The homeless in Thailand are different from that in San Francisco. The people call them beggars, not homeless. In Thailand, they are just sitting with a small cup for people to give them some money. I rarely hear about a beggar attacking people or snatching and running away.

The Thai government does not deal with the problem of begging, and beggars do not receive any welfare from the government. In San Francisco, I have heard that there is support and help for the homeless people. I won't support them because I think most of the homeless that I see use drugs and ask people for money for drugs. In Thailand I the beggars do not ask for money for drugs. Beggars in Thailand look very pathetic. They are only elderly people with disabilities and children.

~ ● ~

Alone at Night

By Fah Supaporn Worpang

It was dark night in the winter, and I was staying at my grandmother's house alone. The refrigerator in the kitchen hummed, a clock ticked softly in the background, and nothing moved in my bedroom's murky and grotesque shadows. The quiet felt ominous and vaguely sinister. I told myself to relax.

Then a board creaked, the doorknob twisted and made a slight squeak. I caught my breath and told myself: "It's time for action". There was no turning back, no time for second thoughts. I knew what I would do.

I jumped up, grabbed the broom to protect myself and ready to fight. I walked slowly downstairs. Suddenly, the wind blew very strong, and all my body shook. The weather was chilly, but I was sweating. I kept telling myself, "There is nothing, don't be scared."

Bang!!!! Something happened that made me more shocked. My heart fell down, my pulse raced faster to a high pitch. I was panicking. My brain was telling me to run to my room, but my feet stayed still. I was frozen for a minute, then dashed back upstairs to my room, and covered myself with blanket. I prayed to God and tried to



calm down. After a while, I didn't hear anything anymore, so I felt asleep.

Bang!! Again, without any reason, the ominous sound happened again. I woke up and decided to call the police. Once they arrived and knocked at the door, they searched all around the house looking for anything that might seem strange. So, I was bold enough to come out of my room. The grotesque sound was louder and louder every step I came closer. Immediately, a mountain of food fell down from the kitchen counter, and I saw three kittens race out of the kitchen into the living room. They smiled at me. So adorable! How cute they were!



All my worry vanished. I could only laugh at my fears

and felt really sorry for the policemen that I made them to so much work.

When morning came, my grandmother came to the house, I told her all that happened at night. She just laughed at me and told me that it was normal for these kittens to come in, but she didn't imagine that it would scare me.

Maybe it was also the wind last night that made my night feel so horrible.

~ • ~

The Decision:

The clock is ticking soft and the refrigerators hums in the background. Nothing is move in the room, only the shadows that murky and grotesque. It is a quiet moment that feels ominous, vaguely sinister and forever, so I tell myself to relax. Suddenly, a board creaks, the doorknob twists and makes a sound of a slight squeak. There's no time for a second thought, no turning back. I know I have to do something.

I grabbed my bag immediately, but while I'm walking to the door to leave this room, I see something or some shadow at the other side of the door. Then I'm thinking about last night when I was walking back home and heard my next-door neighbor scream very loudly from faraway. I didn't realize what was happening to her.

"Jacob! Come back," I heard my neighbor shout.

Now I have to do something, so I open the door and what do I see? Two big eyes looking at me! I look down and see a little puppy looking at me. He seems nice, cute and friendly.

"I just got him as a present last night," my neighbor tells me. And I realize that is why she has screamed.

And now I'm late for school.



-- Yim Karnpitcha Ratchadejpaiboon

I grabbed my bag and ran as fast as I could to the door. I opened the door. Suddenly, all the lights turned on. All of my family and friends were here with a cake and shining candles on it. I just realized that it was my birthday today. So, I felt relieved and could relax. The bad imaginations in my head were gone.

-- Mos Polpornsuang Ruangsrijaroenrung

I ran away from my house and I saw the big tree near by my house. So, I decide to hide in the back of tree. Then, I felt something hit in my head. It was really painful and made me open my eyes. I woke up in the bed. My son had just hit my head. It was just a dream!

-- Natt Pornpimol Phasomsap

~ • ~

The Most Important Person in My Life is ...

... My Brother

The person that I'd like to write about is my brother. He is three years older than me, but we are close to each other. We look very similar, but just only on the outside, because our personalities are totally different. We grew up in a Chinese family, and since I'm the youngest sister, he has to take care of me and be a leader for our family. That's why he is a lot more mature than me.

He is the person who changed my life. He suggested that I study abroad, even though I had no idea how to live by myself far away from family. But he taught me how to be an adult and grow up. He told me that nothing is going to change if you don't change yourself first. He taught me how to manage life and said everything is possible if you really want to it. His name is Paul, and he always says #paulpossible as his slogan. For this, he is my role model. I want to be like him and make my family proud of me like I'm very proud of him.



-- Yim Karnpitcha Ratchadejpaiboon

... My Grandfather

My grandfather is now an old man with protruding eyes, standing halfway up the stairs, looking at us leaving and waving goodbye. I know it's hard to say goodbye when grandchildren come to visit and have to leave. He has a lot of wrinkles on his smiling face, but the thing that gets my attention is that his eyes start watering while he is smiling. It's such a hard moment for me too. He lost some of his teeth and has grey hair so everyone can guess he may be over 60 years old. That reminds me about when I was a child, ten years ago. He took care of me in everything when I was young. Suddenly, I think that I will take care of him when he is old in the same way.



<http://www.easy-to-draw.com/how-to-draw-grandpa/>

-- Fay Jarinya Jaroenmueang

~ • ~

... King Rama IX, Father of the Thai People

A person who has inspired me is the late king of Thailand, King Rama IX, who passed away three years ago. He was named "Bhumibol" which means "The Strength of the Land." The impact he had on my life comes indirectly from my family. He has inspired me to make personal sacrifices for good things and always find courage to do what is right.

My late king of Thailand did a lot of things for the Thai people, by his projects. He created rain when the country lacked water and he made rain for farmers. He created projects for teaching the Thai people to live efficiently, called the efficiency economy. He had farms in his palace to try out how to grow plants.



He is a good example for most of the Thai people. He developed all suburban areas. Most of us really appreciate it. He interviewed people before he did his projects and researched about the pros and cons. He doesn't live like a king, but he's like our father. He worked his whole life for over 70 years of his reign.

He always helped the tribes get a better life and stop opium growing. He increased the amount of alternative agriculture for the benefit of Thailand economy. He chose to make his life beneficial to others. I tried to follow his footsteps in doing good for others in any way that I can in my work and everyday life. When I had grown up and was able to see the world more, I realized he was an unbelievable king who excelled in various pursuits and he was exemplary. He is the father of the nation and most of Thai people truly feel that way about him.



-- Pak Duangnapa Prasertpong

~ ● ~

I hoped to meet a lot of my favorite characters here. We took a photo with Donald Duck and Daisy Duck and then walked into the Toy Story Land where children were wearing Woody dresses, and others waiting for a Buzz Lightyear autograph.

The weather was very hot, but everybody was still smiling and happy. I bought popcorn in a bucket shaped like a very cute alien. I carried it around and got a refill that evening. Before we left the park, I wrote some postcards and send them back to my family and friends in Thailand. I wished they were here with me.

On the third day, I was excited because we had made a reservation to have breakfast with Mickey Mouse at the Chef Mickey Restaurant. Actually, it's not just Mickey Mouse who comes out to meet and greet the customers but also Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, Daisy Duck, Pluto and Goofy. We took photos with them and left the restaurant super happy and full of the food in our tummies and a big smile on our faces.

We took a monorail ride into the Magic Kingdom a bit after the park opened. We thought it was going to rain because of the clouds in the sky. We went farther into the park and saw the central attraction of the park, Cinderella's Castle. Luckily, there was a

parade of all the characters in fairytale themes with children dressed up as princesses, Snow White and characters from the movie, *Frozen*.

In the evening, we watched a stunning and beautiful fireworks display. It fulfilled my happiness, but not just me. I think everybody felt the same, too.



<https://droo216.tumblr.com/post/76449377905/davidesky2-sketches-of-walt-disney-world-by>

On the last day we went to Epcot, a huge dome in the shape of Spaceship Earth. It had displays about the future with innovation technologies and international

cultures like an Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow. When I was a child, I got a gift from my aunt. It was a T-shirt from Walt Disney World with a picture of spaceship earth on it. The Spaceship Earth is the icon of Epcot, but this time I had a chance to see it myself.

This trip, we stayed at the Disney Resort and used magic wristband to do everything instead of money. We didn't even have to bring a wallet. For me, Walt Disney World was the coolest place that I've ever visited. It was magic and a dream came true for me. It was just as I imagined it when I was a child. But this is not the end. I'll be back, for sure.!

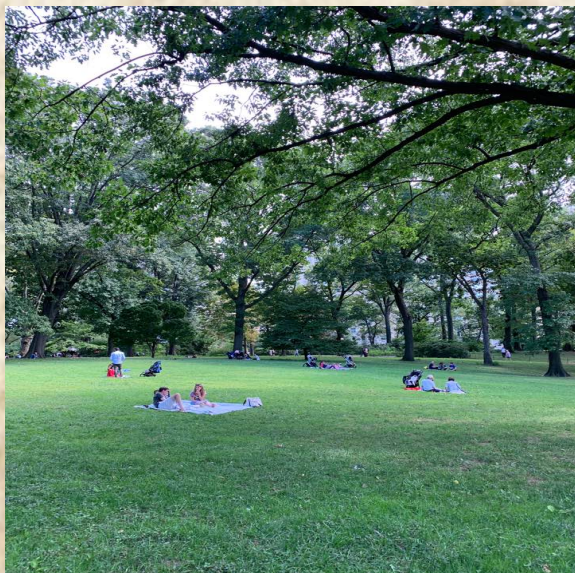
Oh, and there are Disney parks around the world too - Paris, Shanghai and Hong Kong. Wait for me!!

~ • ~

Central Park: The Most Beautiful Thing of All

By Patrick Hajun Jang

The most beautiful thing I have ever seen is Central Park in New York City. Two months ago, my family visited New York City for our summer vacation. We were so excited and curious about everything to see. On our first day, we went to go Central Park, the huge and most beautiful park in the USA, and saw a lot of trees, green grass, and many people. Some people were selling snacks and drinks, even meals, too. It was a warm afternoon in August and the sun was shining. Our family has visited a lot of countries in the world, but this was our first time in New York City for a summer vacation.



I felt more comfortable in Central Park than in parks in Korea, such as the Han River Park. The Han River is the most famous river in Korea, because it flows around Seoul. There are many running courses and bicycle

paths along it. People visit the Han River at night because the market is open every Friday and Saturday night from 6 pm to 11 pm, but only from January to October.



Central Park also sells plenty of food and drinks. However, there is little difference from the Han River Park. In case of Central Park, it's a very popular tourist destination, so there's a lot of restaurants and shops open all year round. Central Park was so peaceful. Children were running and playing with soap bubbles in the grass and on the hills. Romantic couples and students were reading books, talking and laying down on the lawns.

All of us - my older sister, my mother and father with me - also lay down on the grass, closed our eyes, felt the air and smelled the sweet coffee beans from Starbucks while listening to music.

At that time, each of us in our family was dreaming different things. For me, I was imagining the taste of the smell of the grass. My father and sister did not talk, but my mother told me what she dreamed of. My mother reminded me of a junior high school student who felt a cool breeze on a bicycle with her friends after school.

These were my most beautiful sounds, smells, and place. It was like a dream. Now, when I think about Central Park in New York City, I go there in my imagination and feel everything again and again.



https://cdn.archpaper.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/3015-Central_Park-Sheep_Meadow-el468449714426.jpg



<https://media.timeout.com/images/103451632/630/472/image.jpg>



Swimming Helped Me Overcome My Fear

By Kay Kaymintra Chankla

Many people often feel fear, but I don't think many people feel terror really big fear. You might be afraid of small animals, or large animals or some situation that make you feel very bad. But sometimes, a big fear can teach you how to grow up and come out of your comfort zone and become brave. Do you know how? Let me tell you my story.

When I was nine years old, I went with my parents to the National Park in Thailand, about 30 minutes away from my house, where there was a waterfall. As a young girl, everything seemed interesting to me. I was willing to jump into it. My parents let me play around. However, they kept an eye on me because I did not know how to swim.

After a while, my fearful experience began when I saw a boy playing on the big slider across of my zone where I was allowed to go. He went up to the top and slid down to the water and laughing. I decided to across the zone and follow him.

Suddenly, I slid down to the water and started to drown. At that time, my parents were taking care of my three-month-old brother. They did not notice that I fell into the water.

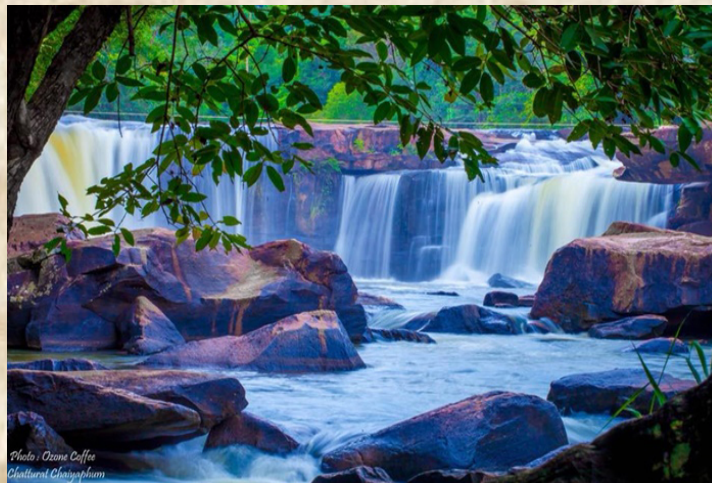
It was very cool, dark and uncomfortable. I tried to call someone the help me, but the wave was too strong, and it was hard to control my body. It was terrifying. Then, I felt someone take me out of the water. My parents were shocked. They cannot swim either, and they thought they might lose me. Luckily, I survived, thanks to a guy who saved my life.

After this situation, I wanted to learn how to swim with the professional swimming teacher, but of course, my parents did not allow me. It took several months for my parents to change their mind.

At the first lesson, I felt unsafe when I saw the pool, but I had a panic

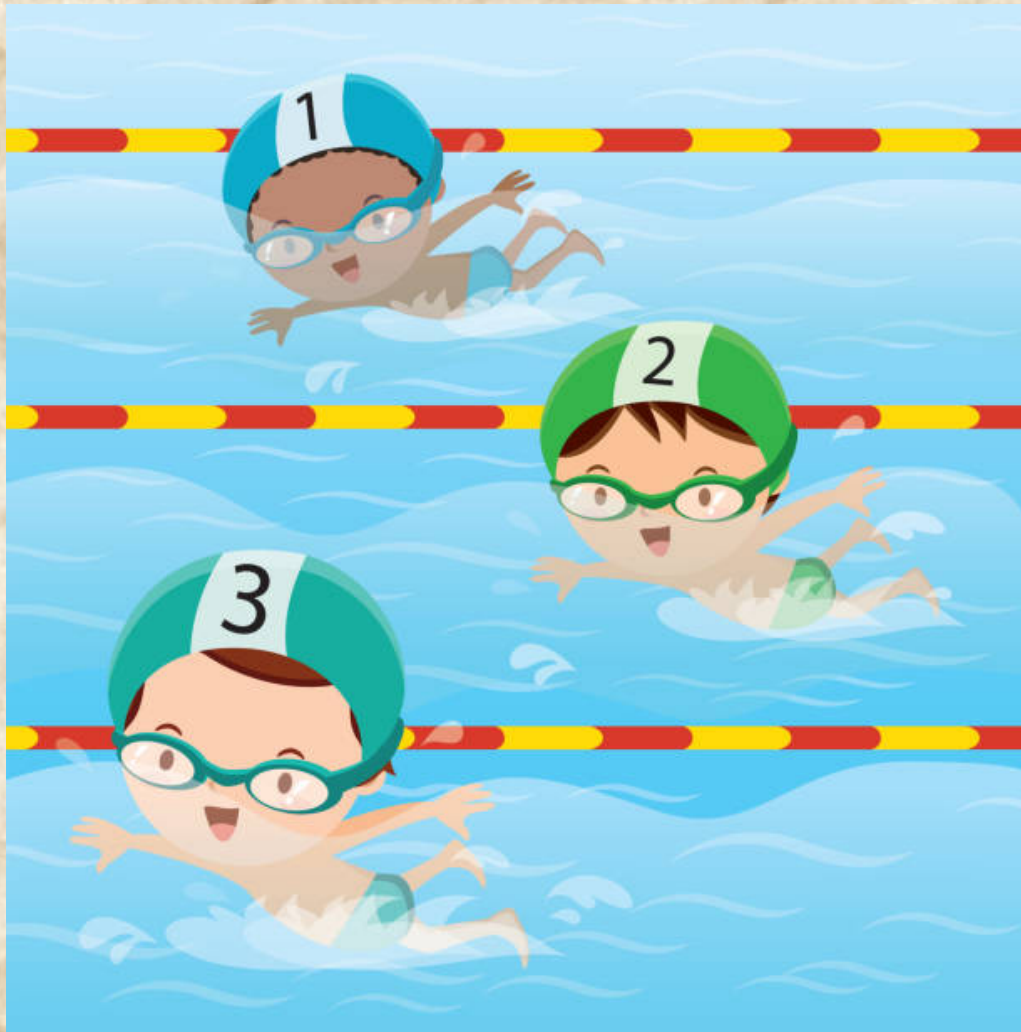
attack when I swam. I did not give it up. It took me almost a month of swimming to feel more comfortable and not have panic attacks. I practiced every day

after school and also on the weekends. I can't remember when I totally forgot my fear, but since then, swimming has become to a big part of my life. In high school, I was such a good swimmer that I won a first runner-up ribbon in a swimming competition. Even better, my



health has gotten better, too. Before, I could not play sport of any kind because my health was a problem. I had asthma and used to get tired easily. As you see from my story, if you ready to overcome

your fear, there are many great things waiting for you to learn.



~ • ~

Goodbye, Comfort Zone

By Pak Duangnapa Prasertpong

The reasons why people love to travel are varied. For me, travel makes me modest. I can see what a tiny place I occupy in the world. I never traveled alone until I graduated from the university, because I wasn't a confident person, and I didn't like myself back then.



So, I decided to travel alone just because of I wanted to overcome all fears, such as how to speak in other languages, how to avoid bad things and unexpected events. I was always scared before going somewhere that I knew nothing about.

Traveling alone is beneficial because it can expand your perspective and get you out of your comfort zone. The first time that I traveled alone, I was so excited, and it brought many experiences and good memories into my life.

My first trip alone was to Singapore, because it's the safest place in Asia for a woman and near my home country, Thailand. People are multi-cultural and welcoming to international guests there. And also, they have a perfectly safe transportation system.

I visited the iconic landmark, the Merlion. It is a statue with a lion's head and a fish body that represents Singapore's origin as a fishing village, and it's the original name. I went to Sentosa island, Universal Studio and Marina bay sand. I was able to take my time to see the city.



Unexpectedly, I met a new friend by asking her to take some pictures at the Merlion. She's Thai. She was also traveling alone. We talked a little bit, and we went out to lunch together in Chinatown. Just because we wanted to try a lot of Singaporean food, but we also wanted someone to share. That's so funny.

At that time, I have learned so much about who I am as a person, how much I can achieve, and how I should set my mind to doing it. I have more confidence to make a big decision. It helps me a lot to work with many people.

Traveling alone means traveling without another's opinions, doubts and fears. It makes me brave. Trust your gut and get out of your comfort zone.

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Photo Credit

<http://thevintagemoth.blogspot.com/2011/09/vintage-illustration-sleeping-child.html>

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<https://twitter.com/bloomssecret>

Memories

to

Remember