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IUF1000: What is the Good Life?

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“This I Believe” Audio Essay Final Transcript

My name is Brooke. I am grateful to say that I am a senior at The University of Florida planning to graduate with a Bachelor’s in Science degree in Microbiology by Spring 2019. And, for my audio essay, I’d like to present my belief regarding personal contentment. As motivational speaker Tony Gaskins stated, “To be content doesn’t mean you don’t desire more, it means you’re thankful for what you have and patient for what’s to come.” (Meah, 2015). Personally, I couldn’t agree more. As a result of my past experiences, the life lessons I’ve learned so far along my 33-year journey, and the countless obstacles I have overcome in this thing called “life”, I’d like to present my belief: *I believe that in order to obtain genuine contentment, one must live and practice a lifestyle which is characterized by gratitude and frequent acceptance of life’s current circumstances.*

My favorite text we have studied this semester is “This is Water” by David Foster Wallace. In this reading, Wallace introduced us to the concept of “Capital-T Truth” and the idea that, “you get to decide how you’re going to see it. You get to consciously decide what has meaning and what doesn’t.” (Wallace, 2005). This concept can be directly applied to my belief that genuine contentment can be obtained now, in the present moment, regardless of your current circumstances. I believe that contentment sprouts from seeds of gratitude and daily showers of acceptance of one’s present situation. You must ask yourself: would I rather be content now? Or,

would I rather continue to search for contentment in hopes to eventually, hopefully, obtain it later? The choice is yours, & your alone.

Fortunately, I have learned this lesson through personal experience. So, I will candidly share a part of my journey in hopes not to be judged, but rather to share my experience to teach others: Upon high school graduation, I embarked on my college journey to the University of Florida. By junior year at UF, I was experiencing serious depression and struggling with alcohol & drug addiction. Reluctantly, I made the difficult decision to take a medical leave and withdraw from UF to return home and seek medical attention and drug & alcohol treatment. After spending nearly 10 years courageously facing & eventually overcoming the biggest obstacle I have ever faced.... I can thankfully say that I just celebrated 2 years clean from all drugs, alcohol, & tobacco. Today, my tangible goods are much less than what they once were, but I honestly feel happier now, with less “things”, than I ever felt before. Today, I am grateful to be happy, healthy, and free. Today, I am proud of myself and the deeply honored that relatively soon from now, I will finally be able to say that I am a University of Florida graduate. Today, it *is* truly great to be a Gator! Today, I am content where I am, and thankful that I am, me.

Works Cited:

Meah, Asad. “35 Inspirational Quotes on Contentment”. Awaken the Greatness Within Website. 2015.

<https://awakenthegreatnesswithin.com/35-inspirational-quotes-on-contentment/>. (accessed 4 August 2018).

Wallace, David F. "This Is Water: Some Thoughts, Delivered on a Significant Occasion, about Living a Compassionate Life". <http://metastatic.org/text/This%20is%20Water.pdf>. 2005 Commencement at Kenyon College. Kenyan College, Gambier, OH. Speech. (accessed 4 August 2018).