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Why the Journey Matters More Than the Destination

Every person in the world is either going through their journey, or reaching their destination. Once someone reaches their destination, the satisfaction with the life they have lived is based off of whether or not they appreciated the things that they experienced during their journey. Students are an example of people that are experiencing their journey. The students in school are living through exciting moments that they will remember forever. These people are at a high point in their life, however, they usually don't realize it until after their journey has ended. The journey is an essential factor in the cycle of life. Without the journey, arriving at the destination would feel boring and unrewarding, since nothing was worked for. The various rewards that a journey offers are what makes it more impactful than the destination. The journey will always be more important than the destination because it is where someone will learn the most about the rest of the world, where people will conquer their greatest challenges, and where individuals will develop important personality traits.

The knowledge people gain while on an adventure makes traveling more essential than the destination. When people explore the rest of the world, they open themselves up to multiple opportunities to learn more things. The unknown author of the explanatory text, "Gone and Back Again: A Traveler's Advice," gives examples on how journeys can help someone learn. The text states that people that are traveling will "...be encountering people whose lifestyles are different

from [theirs],” which will introduce them to new cultures (Gone and Back Again: A Traveler’s Advice 547). These new cultures will allow them to see the differences between their way of living compared to the normal behavior of the residents of the foreign land. The knowledge that is gained from observing how the natives perform their daily tasks will allow the traveler to use some of that knowledge to improve their own lifestyle. Some people are obsessed with completing their life goals as quickly as they can and they end up gaining little wisdom.

O’Connell, the author of “College is a Journey, Not a Destination,” explains why people should take their time while going through school in order to maximize the amount of information that they gain. The destination is what people are trying to achieve in life; however, “[i]t is not a race to the end, but instead what [someone] learn[s] from each step in the journey” (O’Connell paragraph 5). If people rush to complete their goal, they will skip over the learning opportunities in their journey. A person that takes the time to learn from their journey will figure out what they enjoy and dislike, which will determine if they want to continue to pursue their current goal, or if they should change it to something that better fits their interests. The knowledge gained will allow people to understand more about the world they live in and more about the person that they are.

Another reason why journeys matter more than the destination is because the challenges throughout a journey prepare people to face the difficulties that their future will bring. The failures that people go through while trying to conquer their challenges make them stronger and more experienced. Joel Hodge relates this topic to superheroes in the article, “What the Marvel film franchise teaches us about the mystery of transcendence, the nature of heroism and the meaning of life.” This article supports the idea that even the untouchable heroes in the Marvel

films “...have to face suffering and failure, as well as their own limits, cowardice, and flaws” (Hodge paragraph 6). Although the heroes are sometimes defeated, they do not become unmotivated, instead they use their failure as an opportunity to learn. When people learn how they can improve from their mistakes, they become better equipped for the next time they are presented with a burdensome task. Adventures can also include challenges that can be physically or emotionally taxing, which will build up the traveler’s endurance. In the epic poem “Part 2 The Return of Odysseus,” Homer describes some of the painful things that the main character, Odysseus, had to endure once he returned back home. One emotionally taxing challenge that Odysseus conquered was when he wasn’t able to acknowledge his dying dog, instead he “...looked away, wiping a salt tear from his cheek...” (Homer 601). Odysseus knew that he had to ignore his old companion or else his plan would be ruined, so he fought back his emotions and walked past his dog despite his urge to acknowledge it. Challenges like these will help people determine how much they are willing to sacrifice emotionally and physically in order to reach their destination. Challenges are key moments in a person’s journey that will determine if someone will be able to reach their destination.

The last reason why going on journeys are more valuable than arriving at a destination is because journeys will allow individuals to obtain beneficial personality traits. Traveling requires people to have certain characteristics if they want to be able to complete their journey. Bravery and courage are necessary traits to have from the beginning on an adventure. In the poem “Courage,” Anne Sexton shows how courage is a powerful tool that will be used throughout someone’s whole life. Courage is important when venturing into the unknown, and it can even be found during “the first spanking when [someone’s] heart went on a journey all alone” (Sexton

lines 6-7). Courage can be found in people from the first moments of their journey. Journeys require people to experiment with what they are uncomfortable with and try new things, which all require people to have some amount of courage. Determination is also an important characteristic to have. If someone wants to make it to their destination, they have to stay determined and focused on why they are going through the journey. Homer wrote about multiple occasions when Odysseus' determination led to his survival, in the poem, "Part 1 The Adventures of Odysseus." An example of this was when Odysseus and his men were challenged by sirens that were trying to interfere with their return home, "...but they bent steady to the oars...all rowed on, until the sirens dropped under the sea rim, and their singing dwindled away," which demonstrates how dedicated Odysseus' crew was to return home (Homer 583). The crew kept a focused mindset and thought about what they were fighting for, in order to make it through this challenge. There will be countless things that try to deter people from their goal, but if they stay focused they will be able to ignore distractions and reach their destination. As the journey progresses, existing personality traits will become stronger and new traits will be gained. These characteristics will be used for facing other challenges in the future and will help people prepare for the hardships later in life.

The education that people receive from a journey, the obstacles that people learn to tackle, and the level of maturity that a person develops from experiencing a journey, all make the path to reach the goal more important than the destination. These reasons explain why people tend to value their journey more than their destination. The destination is what people work towards, but the journey represents everything that the person had to endure. The challenges and depressing moments in someone's adventure remind them how hard they worked. The memories

and knowledge gained are the rewards that remind people how great their journey was. When someone ignores their journey, they aren't able to create unforgettable memories, which leave them feeling empty. When people reflect on their journeys, they consider it the best time of their lives'. The people that don't appreciate their journeys are the same people that wish they could experience their adventures again after they reach their destination. Without the journey, the destination would feel worthless.

Works Cited

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