



“The Importance of Life Lessons” by Ella
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Life lessons sneak up on you; you never know when one is going to pop up. You never know when you are going to learn a new life lesson that affects you in a big way. Life lessons change the way we look at things and how we act about them. They affect our lives in huge ways by helping us learn from past mistakes and challenges.

Life lessons spring up in unexpected ways, like if you're reading a book and the character learns that they shouldn't do something again, you realize that you shouldn't do that in life either. In the short story *An American Childhood* by Annie Dillard, the main character learns that you need to have fun as a kid and live in the moment. "If in that snowy backyard the driver of the Buick had cut off our heads, Mickey's and mine, I would have died happy, for nothing has required so much of me since as being chased all over Pittsburgh in the middle of winter-running terrified, exhausted-by this sainted, skinny, furious redheaded man who wished to have a word with us" (Dillard, page 125). This sentence shows how exhilarated the kid was that they got to have fun and witnessed it in the moment.

Knowing life lessons, they change the way we look at things and how we act about them. If you think of something one way then go through something it could be a life lesson and you now think about it a different way. An example of this is in the short story *Names/Nombres* by Julia Alvarez where the main character learns that it doesn't matter how long or complicated your name is, it is still yours and you should love it how it is. The main character has an older sister that has a more complicated name but she has learned to live with it and accept it. The main character learned that she should also accept her name. This was a big thing to overcome for her and she grew from it by learning a new life lesson and acting differently going forward.

I have learned life lessons by going through experiences, either by going through something or just figuring something out. For example, I was rejected four times by soccer teams

I have tried out for. I have worked my way up to try to be the best I can be to succeed, but to no avail in past years.

My soccer journey starts on the night of soccer tryouts. My mom and dad gave me the talk about how to try my best and try my hardest to get picked on the top team. I went to tryouts and met all of the girls that were trying out as well. I thought I was doing extremely well, and was keeping up with them.

I guess my best wasn't good enough because the night after the third day of tryouts I was told I was to be put on the third team. If you think that's good, it isn't, not really. I cried for three straight hours that night. After I calmed down my parents told me that it was worth it to keep going even though I was totally doubting myself and wanting to quit. I ended up not quitting and persevering through my doubt of not being a good soccer player.

The next year I tried to get onto the top team, to no avail. I ended up on the third team again but with a different coach. That year was one of my worst years in soccer because the coach always yelled, and the girls were extremely mean. I was seriously contemplating whether to quit, even more than the first year.

In the third year I still wanted a spot on the top team and tried out again. My former coach thought I got a place on the top team and didn't offer me a spot on hers. I ended up losing and not getting spots on either soccer team. After trying out for many other teams, but not finding the right one, I finally found one that was about the same level in soccer that I was at, and I ended up really liking the girls.

The fourth year of tryouts of course I tried again but didn't get on the top team in my age division. The team that I was on the previous year switched coaches and I was cut from the team. I was absolutely devastated because my dad said that there weren't many other teams. I tried out

for those teams, but decided they weren't right for me. Finally, my dad found out that there was a team one year older than me looking for more players and I went to their practice and immediately felt like I fit in. On the second night of practicing with their team, the coach asked me if I would like a spot on his second team which is basically just a continuation of his first team. I obviously said yes to the opportunity to start fresh with a new group of girls and finally reached a huge goal! Through all of this I learned to not give up on the hard things, persevere through the tough times, and learned that I'll get where I want to go eventually.

Life lessons are a big part of our lives that affect how we act and think. Life lessons come from challenges and mistakes in life you have to overcome to learn those lessons. It's important to learn life lessons because they help you with challenges, even small things that seem insignificant at the time. My life lesson of not giving up has helped me so much through tough times and I know it will continue to help me in the future. That's why they are called *life* lessons, right?