Rachel Gonzales

Personal Philosophy Project Credo

Happiness is more than just the release of hormones in the human brain that makes us feel good. It cannot be fully explained by multi-syllable biological terms that removes us from what’s going on in our own bodies. It is an instinct; it is one of the most simple, complex, soul-stirring parts of existence, and it is different for everyone, yet ultimately unites us. We were not created to be alone, depressed, or ashamed. We are not here to be perfect. I have found that happiness is simplicity. It is the feeling of the being sun-kissed on a summer’s day as the breeze brushes your skin; it’s the last breath that you take before you fall asleep on the shoulder of a loved one; it is reminiscing over old polaroids with people who have been by your side for years. I seek happiness by seeking simplicity, and not finding fault in mistakes or imperfections. In my life, happiness is known when you can’t ask for anything else. It is the warmth that is felt in my soul that makes you wish a moment could last forever. Sometimes it can be found in moments of solitude, when I feel most connected to myself, and sometimes it can be found when I put the needs of others before my own. Ultimately, I believe that being happy, and inspiring that same feeling in others, is my purpose in life.

I have only been on this earth for seventeen years, which is just a blink of an eye. In another blink of an eye, I’ll be gone. It can be overwhelming to think of time in this way, but it can also be inspiring. It is the notion that I have such a short time in this universe that drives me to want to impact it in some way. In Existentialism, there is a belief that nothing has any real meaning, but it is still up to the individual to find or create their own meaning in life. It is unfair to try to define how to live a “meaningful" life, because there are billions of souls on this planet living with different circumstances, struggling with different struggles, and dreaming different dreams. In my opinion, the only criteria for a meaningful life should be that the individual is satisfied with their own choices and decisions. I don’t know if I will have lived a “meaningful” life in the eyes of others, but ultimately, that doesn’t matter. Living for someone else is the fastest way to become unhappy, and I intend to never live that way again. For me, meaning is found in happiness. I feel whole when I feel my cat purr as she falls asleep on my lap, or when I can look in the mirror and not focus on my flaws. It is simple, but the meaning of my life is mine and mine alone.

**Proposal**

1. Release the weight of the world from your shoulders and smile, for happiness begins in you. Live with truth and breathe your passion, and never let someone else define your own life.

2. I would like to create a poem for the all-school exhibition.

3. Poetry is representative of my authentic self because I write poetry on my own outside of school. I love language, and I think it would be really amazing to explore happiness and meaning in a way that is not as subjective as art.

4. There’s a feeling that I get when I hear something that really resonates with me, when all I can do is pause and feel the words in my bones. I’d like my audience to feel something like that, and I want them to leave thinking something different than when they walked in.

5. I’m not sure if I want to do a spoken word or a kinetic text project or something else yet, but I know I want the focus to be a long, free-verse poem.

6. The biggest obstacle I anticipate would be writers’ block.

7. Depending on what form I want my poem to take, I might need a projector, canvases, or just my voice and a space to perform.

8. It should take me about two weeks to create a refined poem that I’m happy with for exhibition.

9. I would need an initial conference with Ashley to pin down a project idea, and then I would need occasional conferences and check-ins with Ashley, to combat writing block and to be sure that I’m headed on the right track.