

Live my life

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In December, I had an English speech contest in my school. All the high school students gathered and I made a speech, and luckily I got the first prize. A lot of my friends said “You were great!” “Your English was wonderful!” I was happy but deep in my heart, I couldn’t be satisfied with these complements about my speech. I didn’t know why, so I decided to think about it.

Later I realized my English skill was not a result of my effort. When I was little, my mother took me to a lot of different countries because she loves to travel, so I learned English very naturally. My parents speak English too, so they want me to speak English like them. When I told them that I was going to join the speech contest, they hoped that I would win the first prize. Without any notice, I wrote a speech for my parents to be happy, not for myself.

Since I was little, I learned many things such as playing the piano, doing ballet, and speaking English. I know I’m very privileged to have these opportunities. My parents had a lot of expectations for me. I had to win prizes at piano concerts, get an important role in ballet competitions, and win the first prize at an English speech contest. I have really worked hard for my parents’ expectations. I was glad to see my parents’ happy faces. But after a few years, I worked hard to make them happy, I didn’t do it for me. That’s why I wasn’t comfortable with the complements I got.

I have worked for someone else, not for me. Since I kept doing this for 17 years, finally, I realized I didn’t know what I want to do or what I’m really interested in. Then, I realized I am not living my life.

Let’s think about our school. In my school we have a many chances to use English for example, we have a variety of study abroad program or speech contests like this. But if you choose it or not and is up to you. My friends around me said they didn’t know that there were those programs even

though they are interested in English. Why? I think, in Doshisha schools, we don't have to take entrance exams to enter high school and university. Usually, people who have exams to enter high school or university think about what they are interested in or what they really want to do, but we don't. Our good point is we don't have one big exam, but also it means goes that we don't have a chance to look and think, what do I really want to do?

I remember the moment that I felt really happy. I belong to music club and we competed in a music contest this winter. I felt a true sense of achievement when we won the award. This was the first time I ever did something without being influenced by my parents, so it felt really different.

It took a long time to realize "I am not living my life for myself." Are you living your life? Are you living for someone else? Do you know what you think about the world?

We have many opportunities to see a lot of information from TV, magazines, and mostly smartphones. Since we can see too many opinions, we misunderstand that "those are my opinions". But we should think about what is it our true idea, or you will lose track of what you really think. So now, when I do something, I try to think "is this really what "I" want to do?"

I'm 17 years old. You are very close to becoming adults so maybe you are thinking "I have to change something" or "I want to grow up". And people teach you a lot of things and give you a lot of information, but to live your life, you should not be influenced but think by yourself, and you should have YOUR opinion and not lose the true you. If you can live your own life, you can find the things that you really want to do and you can choose how to live your life.