

First-place winner

It's Time We Start Helping

After going through the REAL. LIFE. Exhibit, the phrase "I'm only one person but I can make a difference" changed for me to "I'm only one person so I can and SHOULD make a difference." Like many fellow classmates, I found a new appreciation for the life I live. Not having to worry about food and shelter never crossed my mind as I bought those \$50 pair of jeans. The hard fact that more than half the world lives on \$2 a day seems unimaginable to the common American. \$2 is only half what we pay for our grande frappachinos at Starbucks and our value meals at McDonald's. Yet we complain.

Instead of complaining, we should be helping and making a difference. Maybe we pass on the bottle of coke from the vending machine today, or instead of buying another pair of shoes we don't need, we could donate the money to people who don't even have shoes. We could even make those small sacrifices to help build a well somewhere in our world where people don't have clean water to drink. We should be grateful for running water and bathrooms when 40% of people in the world don't have access to safe toilets, killing 2 million children a year from disease. And that's just the beginning. Seeing how people's lives were washed away with a single wave, or how 1 million Americans were left homeless from Hurricane Katrina not knowing if they were going to survive.

I thank God for my family, friends, not having to worry about war where I live, and for getting to stay in a warm home, and not at a refugee camp. I thank him for clean water, for my brothers not having to be child soldiers and for not being affected by AIDS. And finally I thank God for the safety I have that I know someone cares about me, and that I will be taken care of when I need help or am sick.

But 1 in 4 people don't have access to medical care. Who will help them when they call out in need? Well, they already have.

I'm only one person, but I can make a difference by bringing awareness to what's going on in our world. And it's time we realize it is OUR world, and we all live together on this place. It's time we stop forgetting and start helping.

This is real life.

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Age 15

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