

## **Honorable Mention** **Laws of Life Essay**

by  
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There have been many changes in my life. Yet only two really stick out. It's funny how so many things can happen in life, yet only one or two things are truly important. It shows that you have to really look hard for what you are trying to find. When deciding your laws of life.

When the first big change occurred it was like my whole world had turned upside down. I don't remember how I was told. I think I have either been trying to forget it or just blocking it out. My mother came up to me and said, "You know that I will never lie to you about what's going on in my life?" I told her "yes, I know." At that moment I knew what she was going to say. Then she blurted it out, "I have a terminal illness." For the longest time what she said did not sink in. I was numb. It was like I was a mute and I had no feelings. When it did it hit me, at first I thought about it, then I cried for hours. I am a religious person, yet I don't go to church. While I was crying I said, "Why God, Why?"

When something bad happens to someone, people always say this happens to other people not me. I think that's unrealistic. These people are just being naive. When I was saying "Why God?", that is not what I was going for. From the time my mom had told me she was dying 3 years ago, I have seen her go through things that no one should have to see. When you see someone go through so much pain, you don't want to say, "I am glad it's not me." Yet when I see her in pain, I want to take her place. Suffering is very hard to watch someone go through. What I have learned is that I can't take life for granted. Also, you should tell the person that you love them every day, even if you are angry at them. I have not had a typical teenage life. When most teens are out with friends on a Friday night, I am at home helping my mom. Life is not what you expect it to be. When you are growing up you have all these expectations of what life is supposed to be like. A child wants two parents and that little cozy house with the white picket fence. When reality hits, it can be devastating.

Some say to take the bad things that happen to you and find good in them. That's where my next big change came. I took a class called Senior Seminar. The first day when I met the teacher she was so excited for us to be there even though she had no idea what was going on our lives or who we were. Then as the weeks went on she started to get to know us as individuals. At first I was not willing to open up, then she took us on a trip called "high ropes training." During that trip we had the privilege of getting to know her and two other teachers as real people. That's when I started to open up more and be who I am and not who I was "expected" to be. The change came when the teachers helped me realize that I can be whatever I want to be in life. Before then, I never really liked myself and I had no confidence in what I did. Now don't get me wrong - I still have trouble believing in myself. Yet they helped me gain that confidence to get through this school year. On that trip I learned it was ok to cry when you need to.

At the end of the day at our hotel we got together in a big conference room and they asked us what we have overcome in life so far. I knew what I had overcome but I

really did not want to share it. One of the teachers began to share a experience similar to what I was going through. This made me think I might go ahead and get it over with. Then, before it was my turn one of my classmates shared another experience similar to mine. I realized that I am not alone in this world. When it came to my turn I came out and told them about my mom. No one knows this, but I am proud of myself for telling my classmates and teachers and for being able to get my feelings out. I have taken this experience of believing in myself and put it to good use. I use it by proving to others that I can do anything I put my mind to. Even though that may not seem like a big change, it is to me! I will never forget that experience. It has helped me and will always help me.

I have taken what I could from the experience from my mom and turned it into good. In the class, Senior Seminar, we all had to do a community project. I decided to do something good for people with disabilities. I guess it was sort of a tribute to my mom. Two classmates and I planned an all day workshop for students to see what people with disabilities go through. I was so excited when the day came. My mom was the main speaker. Everyone loved her. At the end I explained that the reasons I did this project was because of my mother. I knew that my teacher was proud of me. I know my mom was proud of me too.

I will never know what its like to have a "normal" teenage life. Yet, you know what, I don't think I would want one. I would never know what I know not if not for my experiences with my mom. I probably would have been one of those naive teenagers who doesn't know what to expect in the real world. I am not looking forward to paying bills, having a nine to five job and all the other adult responsibilities but I know what's there and what to expect in real life. Even though life can get pretty rough, I will always have a good outlook on life. I have learned that I have that choice.