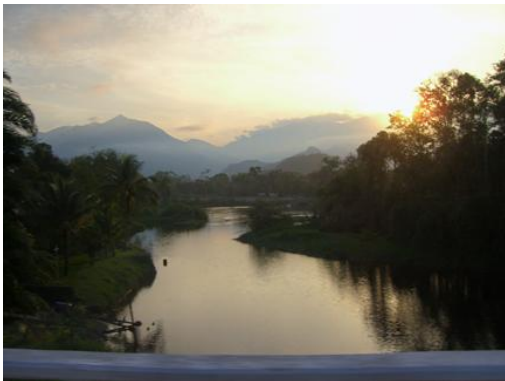




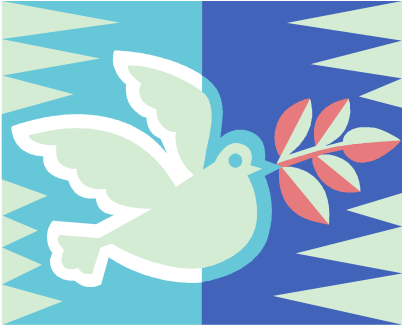
what I value Most in Life

A Collection of Essays by
The Participants of CCL&D's Academic Upgrading and
International Women's Integration Programs



December, 2009

My Important Things



The things I value most things in my life are peace, health, education, social life, religion and family. What is the most important is health because if I am healthy I can be whatever I want to be. A peaceful life is equally as important as health. When I have physical health and psychological peace, I will have good thoughts and relationships with everybody around me and be successful.

Meskerem Wabeto, Academic Upgrading Student

Money is a Valuable Thing in My Life

I can't live without money. There are many reasons to value money in my life. Some people don't have money; they can't afford their family. Some don't have family because of money. I have a family and I am supposed to look after or to manage everything for them, such as food, shelter and clothes. Every month I need to pay the rent, so lack of money is a big challenge in my life. Without money, it is not easy to have friends. If I have lots of money, I will be famous and many people will love me.



It is very hard to afford medication. Sometimes I get sick or my children could be. This situation is frustrating and sometimes causes depression in my life.

Without money, how can I communicate with family: relatives, friends and others? If I need to communicate with them, I must have money to buy a phone, a computer or postage stamps to contact them. All of these need money.

Last, I need money for transportation. If I have transport, my journey is easier. Some places are too far for walking, especially in the winter time. If I can't afford a car, I need to use T.T.C, but all each of these needs money.

All above are reasons why I value money in my life.

Zainab Mulana, Academic Upgrading Student

My Children-My Treasures

Every morning when I wake up and I look myself in the mirror, I can not stop remembering this phrase “One day at a time. Help me to believe in what I can be and all that I am. Show me the stairway I have to climb. Lord, for my sake teach me to take on day at a time”. Often we must bear the challenges in our life, our experiences and our choices past, and take time to look back, and reflect on what we have learned, without fear or confusion. We can always learn a small degree from others’ experiences, and today I am here; stronger than ever because my children give me strength and love, and made me the person I am today.



These little treasures make me wake up everyday because they are my heart, my soul, my life, my entire world. Thanks to them I feel I can change the world, make possible the impossible, be the pathway who contributes to help them to build their dreams just by looking in my children eyes.

Valeria Martinez, IWIP Participant

What I Value The Most

I value my family the most because we have a long history together. Back around twenty years ago we had that common bond with each other, but nowadays it seems to just drift off into the distance. For us as a family I miss those fun times we all had together. Instead, now we have fights and we don't talk to each other. I wish I could turn back time twenty years and look at all of our loving memories together and the quality time we spent as one unit. We need to just leave the problems behind and keep the love of the family strong. As a family we need to value each other and keep it that way for the rest of our lives, so in time there will be no more problems for me or the family ever again.



Chris Lancaster, Academic Upgrading Student

Peace and Harmony

There are a number of things that I value in my life, e.g. my family, my success, my social life, personal life and professional development, peace and harmony. All are equally valuable to me. However, if I have to choose one that I value the most in life it is a healthy society that provides kids to develop their full potential, that allows everyone to enjoy their human rights and has a peaceful environment. I believe everyone can enjoy their equal rights, equal opportunities, can feel they belong to the place with peace and harmony in a healthy society.



Bijaya Sharma, IWIP Participant

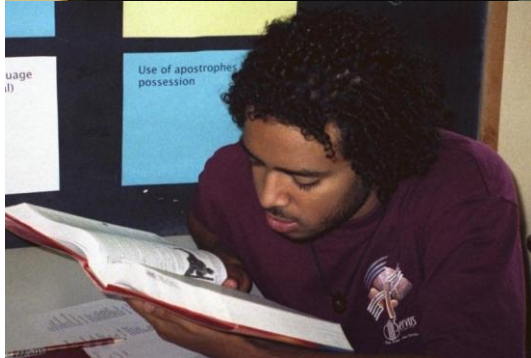
Education and Work I Value Most

Education is the thing I value most in life. The world today is full of science and technology. This includes advanced tools equipment and machines are the part of the world of education. To learn can give me a chance and an opportunity to change my life. Education will make me know my rights as a human being by being treated well, and treating others well too. I will know my constitution as a citizen by following the rules, and the regulations that tell me what to do, or not to do. To be educated is how to find out who I am and who I want to be. In order to face this world today, I need education for self confidence, decision making, and thinking.



Something other than education that is important is work. I work to manage my everyday life. Without working I can't survive well, and it can make me end up in a bad situation. I might become frustrated, idle, and it can be a predicament for me. Drug abuse, alcohol problems are the biggest disasters that I can get in if I'm not working, so I could become homeless. I have to work, and support myself by completing my goals, like education, health insurance, and long term investment. Before I start working, I need training and experience to get ready for work.

Yahya (Malam) Mbarack, Academic Upgrading Student



Water is the Most Valuable Thing in my Life

Water is life. We need water to live. When there is a water shortage, there is a serious problem. A water shortage is facing many countries in the world, some in Africa and the Middle East. The main reason for the shortage of the water is the growing population in the world. There is more demand on the world supply, for example more land is needed to grow the food. We need to save water because water is life. This resource is becoming scarce, and it is difficult to replace because little rain falls in some regions now. An additional problem is water pollution, with the increased industrialization and increased use of the chemicals. Another reason is that the richer people use more and more in their homes, for instance, people like to bathe everyday and use more water. We must stop selling water and buying water around the world. We depend on water and the animals do too. This is an important resource for everyone. Water is life, no water, no life.



Mike Kanguvi, Academic Upgrading Student

My Beautiful Family

My name is Olga Florean, and I am from Mexico. In my country to be a woman means a hard life. The women are strong because they have many activities in the society. The women are the framework of the families. They actually are the support in many homes.

Each day I give thanks to God for giving me life and because I am a woman. I am very happy to share and spend a lot of time with my two daughters. I feel proud of them. I try learning and understanding their new needs in this country because they are teenagers. I show them all my values, my culture and the importance of being a woman. I think that they are very strong and have the power with the capacity for building a better way.

I am thankful to Canada for giving me the opportunity to live in this place because I was reborn and I feel free and happy finally.

Olga Florean, IWIP Participant



The Things I Value in My Life



There are many things I value in my life, like money, friendships, even my artwork, but what I value most is my loved ones. Money, art, and even friends come and go but family is there always.

I cannot picture my life without my parents and my husband. They are my support system and they'll be by my side whenever I need them. Even when I let my parents down as a teenager, they never gave up on me and always pushed me to do the right thing. As for my husband, our love grows stronger as time goes on. I've not known anyone with a connection like ours, nor with as much in common as we do with each other. So if I could put a value on all of this, it would be priceless.

Amber Chandler, Academic Upgrading Student

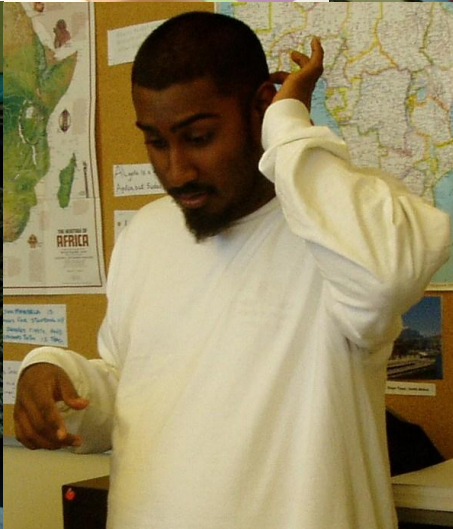
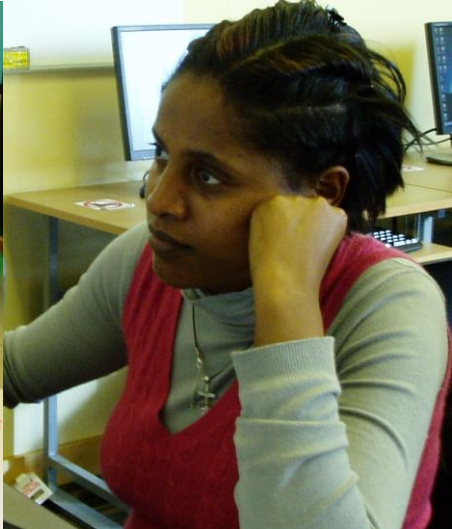
Importance

There are quite a few valuable people in my life. The most important are my three best friends: Amanda, Scooby and Teasha who are always there for me when I need them. When I want advice, they listen and help me out. Then there are my two godchildren, Javonte and Janae, who every time I see them amaze and teach me that I shouldn't always be so serious, above all they make me smile just by saying my name. I also value my boyfriend Colin who makes me feel like I am the most important person in the world.

The valuable things in my life keep me from being stressed. School is important because I love to learn, which in turn is going to help me better my future to become a chef. The next two things I really do value are music and shopping. I love listening to rap and R&B and it really helps if it's anything by Keyisha Cole or Tupac, also I love shopping at Winners, Aéropostale and Champs. I could easily spend all day shopping as long as I have enough money and my stylist/best friend Amanda by my side.



Holly Pelletier, Academic Upgrading Student



Love Encourages Awareness

Although in every culture human beings dream of a better society to live, the despair and destruction are present in daily life. Factors like famine, poverty, inequity, discrimination, violation of human rights, war, sadness and death are not only part of such destruction, but they also are horrible realities of the modern world. Unfortunately, all of us have contributed to this universal catastrophe, because we have forgotten to take care about our Mother Earth. On the contrary, we contribute to destroy nature by depleting and polluting its resources. Likewise, we have lost connection with sacred sources of life. Lastly, and perhaps the worst human behavior, is the act of devastating feelings of other people without compassion.



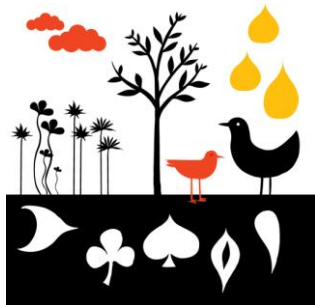
Learning to love our nature and being more considerate and tolerant with one another could make this world a better place to live. In this sense, everyone should have the right and the opportunity to find his or her own development, but always considering the rights of others to do the same. Furthermore, we must educate each other on the art of loving and defending the environment. In this sense, in order to improve leadership processes that allow creating awareness among society, it is important that all people find a way to reach spiritual and personal stability and growth. After that, we hope caring people will build a more harmonious world.

To conclude, the aforementioned reasons of what I value most in life is love and a sense of responsibility.

Dora Leon, IWIP Student

Life Itself

I'm not sure what I value most in life, except maybe life itself. My life thus far has been full of negativity. The few things I valued in the past I



couldn't be true to, because of my lifestyle. Over time it became easier to just not care. I've just recently [after a long battle] been able to say good-bye to my old ways.

I'm starting to value myself, which in itself is amazing. I'm discovering the real me, and as I do, I'm finding a lot of positive things about myself. I'm finding I value a lot of things, most of all, life itself.

Doug McMasters, Academic Upgrading Student

Education & Family



My education and my family I value most in my life. Education plays an important role in my world. The reason for this is without it I cannot accomplish my tasks or goals. I need education to understand and to explain myself well. With it, I will achieve most in life and master life's challenges that are facing me. With education, I can be able to fill out a form, get a good job and most of all earn a good salary.

Family is the second most valuable thing in my life. Without family I am lonely, sad and confused.

Relatives are very encouraging, supportive and helpful. They are always there to build me up whenever I need it most, and they are always there to share my good and bad moments.

Shiana Stowe, Academic Upgrading Student

What I Value In Life

Going back to school was a smart thing for me to do. When I told my best friend, Bob, he told me that it was a great idea to learn more and get an education in order to have a more enjoyable life. I want to be able to move up into a better job and communicate with other people. I enjoy coming to school everyday because it will help with getting along with my daughter, Rhonda and the rest of the family too. For now, my two cats and Bob are all that I am close to here.



I will make the best of what to do in order to achieve what I have lost out on. As time moves ahead, so will my need to learn in order to keep up with society and everything that goes on in everyday life. Everyone will see that you learn something new everyday of your life. I think that Rhonda would be proud of her dad that he has made it in order to be able to keep up with her. Most of all I am proud of what I am learning and will be better off in life and have fewer worries later in life.

Ernie Mclean, Academic Upgrading Student

Life with Education and Family

In my life, I never thought education was very important to me until last year. At that time, I got laid off. Education always is important especially in Canada or anywhere you go in the world. That is why I would like to get enough education. My goal is to be a math teacher overseas.

My family is also very important to me. I am more than happy at least that they are living in the best country ever in the world. They are living with peace and love. I do not feel lonely, and I am very sure they will have enough education and good life. Other than that life is beautiful.



Jamal Sefer, Academic Upgrading Student

Good Health

Health is one thing that I value the most. Last year I got so sick for a week, my whole body was in pain. During the time I was sick, only my son and I were home. My son helped me with minor things like getting a glass of water, but he could not help me with major things. For example, when I needed to cook, my body was very weak I could not get up from my bed. A good friend of mine, Winnie, knew I was sick. Winnie came by, and she made a big delicious meal for us. Not only did my friend cook, she also made sure my apartment was clean as a whistle.

I slowly began to realize the importance of health. Not being healthy can cause several symptoms of depression. For instance, when you get really sick and you end up immobile. The daily activities which you used to be able to do when you were healthy you can't do anymore. In addition, friends and family have their own lives to deal with and they cannot be by your side all the time, all this can cause depression. With good health you can do anything in life. That is why I value health the most.



Elizabeth Phili, Academic Upgrading Student

Clarion

I believe that in life there are numerous things that could be valued. Such as, relationships with my own and immediate families, friends, society and the life itself, because they are the significant possessions we carry as every moment revolves around them. However; when I bring them together, to me it all comes down to one thing which is empowerment. Consequently, since I have started thinking about this matter, the first thing that pops up in my mind that I value most is my inner strength and



conviction. I remember going through sex differentiation as a girl in the society back in my home, but it was my inner strength that carried me through all obstacles to proceed in life. I have gone through so many challenges including unemployment, financial problems as well as cultural adaptation. I feel proud of myself when I think of memories with all the above problems and how smoothly I have tackled them.

Kamrun Nahar, IWIP Student

Family

What I value most is family: my sister, Mother and Father. The reason why I value my mother is she guides me through life in a good mannered way. When things get tough she talks to me and asks what is wrong. I value my sister because she has already experienced what I have gone through, so she advises me to be a good brother. I value my dad because he is so energetic. He always wakes up early in the morning to play golf. He always challenges himself and plays the longer course.

The family activity that I value the most is when we go to church on Sundays. After the mass has ended, I ask my mother what the homily has to do with the Bible verse. One thing is that the point summarizes the passage that was read aloud.



Another event that I like is when we gather at my grandmother's house to pray for our ancestors. When we are done praying we eat a little snack and drink soda. The adults drink alcohol which is made from rice and yeast.

All of these reasons are why I value my family the most.

Justin Kwon, Academic Upgrading Student

Achieving My Goals for My Son

In my life, what I value most is my son. He is the reason I attempted to get back into school, so that I can get my GED. My son means the world to me. I want to get an education, so that I can make my life and his much easier. My dreams for my son are for him to attend a private school, and to get a much better education than I have. That is why I want to become a police officer.



Becoming a police officer, is the second thing that I value in life. To become a police officer I have to get my GED, and my 'G' licence. I am working hard to become a police officer. That is why I am devoting all of my time to studying, and to achieving all of the information that I will need. I am paying attention and focusing on my goals in life. My son is the reason for all of these things. I want him to grow up in a comfortable environment.

Camille Chambers, Academic Upgrading Student

Sports, Sports, Sports

If anyone had to grill me about sports I would say it's a great thing to play and watch.

In today's sports world a team without players and coaches, there's always the one star or breakout player that shines and has a team on a great winning streak, for example a pitcher. Sometimes the players give the pitcher a no-hitter where he lets no runs come in from the other team. In any ballpark or arena, the crowd comes alive and is like the 13th players or the 6th man off the bench. If there's one thing that gets to me, it has to be practice. I know you have to practice everyday, even if you are on a winning streak, but if you loose several games in a row then you have to practice until you can't practice any more.



Before there were practices, players would come in at 7am and not leave until everyone on the team had gone from the field or court. That showed heart and dedication to your teammates and coaches. There is much heart put out each and every night.

Colin Singh, Academic Upgrading Student

