

Essay on Is Life Too Hectic to Enjoy Fully?

For most of us living in towns and cities today, the answer to the above question would be a definite 'Yes'.

The reasons are obvious. Look at an ordinary schoolboy from an average home in a city. First and foremost, he has to go to school. After spending five hours in school every day he has to have extra tuition, swimming lessons, art lessons, and various other activities so that he can learn as many things as possible. Finally, when he arrives home, he has to have a bath, have his dinner and if he is lucky, get to watch television for a while. Then it's back to the grind: finishing his homework. Come weekends, there will be picnics, parties, and other functions. In short, the poor kid has no time to relax. Whether done purposely or not, he is being pushed all the time. The parents ought to realize that their child is not a superman. If pushed beyond his limit, the consequences may not be pleasant.

The result of his incessant pushing is not a well-rounded person, as is hoped, but one who does not know how to relax. This kind of person is exemplified by many adults living in the city. Such an adult is aggressive, harried, intolerant and all geared-up for success. Not everyone is going to be a roaring success. Most will not be so. Failure has become a dirty word, a condition that is considered shameful. So the poor trapped soul struggles on trying to prove himself. He tries so hard to make a good living that he forgets to live. He does not enjoy his life anymore. "Where got time, lah" becomes his favorite catch-phrase. He has no time to live, really live.

To fan the flames of this hectic pace of living are innumerable

amounts of consumer goods on the market, increasing rapidly with no end in sight. I remember the time I wanted to buy a bottle of shampoo in a local supermarket. I picked a bottle and looked at it. That was my undoing. Two salesgirls converged on me and insisted that I buy another brand they were promoting. They had anti-dandruff, conditioner, for dry hair, oily hair etc. After a couple of minutes of continued hassling, I walked out empty-handed. I bought my bottle of shampoo from a sundry shop outside town.

That is just an example of how hectic our lives have become. Maybe some of us are already numbed by the number of advertisements on television, radio and the newspapers. What do they all preach? Invariably their products are the best. By using their products, we improve our lives better cars, beds, orange juice, pens, soap powder, and a million other things, all made for a better life. Have our lives really become. Any better because of all these products? If so, how is it that we have pollution everywhere? How come the hospitals and clinics are always full? How do we explain the rise in crime, pornography and all manners of human perversion and discontent?

Look at the pace of life in a city rush, rush, and more rush to do more and more things in as short a time as possible. The rush for buses, traffic jams and the resulting frayed nerves are part and parcel of city living. Try walking slowly in a lunch-time crowd on the sidewalk and you will be jostled and pushed if not trampled on. Everybody has got only a short break for lunch. So, it is rush to fill the stomach, as quickly as possible, at a fast-food shop. Everything becomes fast, otherwise one cannot cope, cannot meet the deadline. Faster, faster maybe one will be dead faster too.

Even the holidays are hectic. The trend is to see as many places as possible. So, a two-week guided tour of a country becomes two weeks of hectic shuttling between places, force-fed with sights and sounds

of quickly forgotten stopovers. What does a tourist get from such a tour except for a fatigued body and a scrambled mind? The only consolation is that he can tell his buddies at work that he has visited the . or Tahiti. Has he?

Such hectic living is not for me. I prefer a slower pace of life where I can savor each moment as much as possible. It is crazy to rush and not see so many things around us. Maybe we can learn something from William Henry Davies' immortal lines.

*What is this life if full of care?
We have no time to stand and stare?*