

## *This iBelieve Essays*

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### **This iBelieve**

**by Banyan Batts**

This last spring, I had my first (of two) near death experiences, which was from an equipment malfunction while rock climbing. I was at the top of the cliff, and I began the time-consuming process of cleaning the route, which means to remove your equipment from the wall so you don't leave it behind. I had tested my sling (which is like a small rope) and was now untied from my rope, the sling being the only thing holding me up on the wall from certain death. I was holding onto the wall when I heard a noise that sounded like a rope coming out of a harness and hanging limp; it was kind of a *thwwfp* noise. I kept my hand on the wall and looked down at my harness. I noticed with horror that there was nothing holding me onto the wall, and my hand was the only thing that had kept me alive.

I was in a panic, so I called down to my dad and said in a shaky voice, "The sling. It came undone from my harness." He started to calmly talk me through what to do, and his calm steady voice helped me to calm myself, which saved my life. He told me to try and clip (a clip/carabiner is a metal circle type thing with a place to clip it onto things) myself back into the sling. I was terrified and trying to clip myself with one hand was almost impossible. After a few terrifying attempts, I finally managed to clip myself back onto the wall with my sweaty and shaking hands, finished taking my gear out of the wall, and I came down. I soon realized that I had unknowingly untied the knot, but when I had tested it, it had held up because it was so wound up in my harness, but as soon as I relaxed it, it came loose. The entire time I was up there, clinging to the wall for my life, I was determined to survive. There was so much that I hadn't done, I hadn't lived a full life and I didn't want to miss out on those opportunities.

I believe in living life to the fullest and doing what you enjoy. I learned this by almost missing the opportunity to do what I love and really make myself happy. This means that even if you have an amazing job, one that is making you filthy rich, if you don't enjoy it, quit it. I want to be a software developer because I have always loved computers and been fascinated by coding. Almost losing my life showed me that it's not worth it to do something that you hate, unless you have a very good reason to do so, like having to take care of someone you care about.

Living life to the fullest doesn't mean thinking of only yourself, or doing something like robbing the bank or polluting the air so that your company is successful with no thought for future generations. It instead means to spend time with those whom you love, and enjoy the "small" things, which are really the "big" things. I walked into my living room the other day and saw my dad sitting on my couch with a nostalgic expression on his face, and he told me that he had found our old video camera and had watched some of the videos that featured his grandfather, who had passed away a few years back. This made him sad because he realized that he hadn't spent enough time with his grandfather, because at the time that he could have he was my age and he

was too busy playing video games, hanging out with friends and watching television. He sat me down and told me that he was going to do his best to teach me to value people over things, to spend time with people while you can because nothing lasts forever, and people are more important than things.