

# Perspectives



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## Life is a Journey

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**‘Life is a journey**, not a destination’ is a quote pulled from the lyrics ‘Amazing’ by Steven Tyler, ‘the demon of screaming’. When learning who wrote this quote, I immediately disregarded it. How could a man known for his heavy drug addiction and alcohol abuse hold any integrity? Steven Tyler was the front man for the band Aerosmith, not only a rock icon, but also a sex symbol globally. An interest sparked and I got thinking more about this quote: ‘Life is a journey, not a destination’.

We often rush from one place to the next; convincing ourselves that life is a race, a destination, somewhere to reach, and somewhere to be. For every action we take, it is to get somewhere, to accomplish something — to reach that final destination, to conquer that final goal. We as humans strive to succeed and to achieve what we personally view as greatness. Society teaches us to win, to be successful and triumphant over others. Our civilisation also is constantly aiming to be somewhere else; we look to the future, worry about the past and forget about the present.

When we fail, are unsuccessful, or fall behind we can choose which road to take on this journey, one being to reattempt the goal that we are striving for, and the other to give up and to admit defeat. We are taught to win, not to fail, as it is a global recognition that being defeated shows your weaknesses. So when we do fall short of the mark we don’t know how to respond. After all, it is easier to be a champion than a loser. When people get lost in the race, there is no-one else who can pick them up when they fall. Depression merges

as people fail. They believe they are worthless, as they did not meet the destination wanted, required or expected of them.

Life is full of deadlines, we constantly run on a time limit, whether it be career orientated or personal, to reach that aim or objective. Before our eyes the days melt into weeks, which turn into months, and eventually years pass. We are too orientated with the future, so we lose track of what we want out of the present. We forget about the now, we overlook the journey and concentrate on the destination — the objective, the goal, the purpose.

We are taught that everyone in life has a purpose to fulfil, to reach that purpose is your destiny and your goal. You are to make a difference and you will impact others. Again the idea of the journey is lost. To be on a journey you have to be striving for somewhere, but the focus shouldn't be on the conclusion, but on the process at hand.

We are judged by achievements and the successes we accomplished. We are often remembered by the acts we performed, the destination we arrived at, not necessarily the road or journey we took. Every journey has an end, a final destination, the last stop, but instead of putting all of our energy into that one moment we should embrace the life that is, the current road we are on.

Personal journeys create personalities and differences in society. It is individual differences that make a dynamic and energetic world. We have our history, our past, and our journeys pushing us forward. Without this history we wouldn't have unique stories, unique journeys.

Individual stories of self-discovery and greatness inspire not only the youth of today, but also all generations in reaching their full potential. Without looking for guidance and inspiration from others we may never realise the potential that every single person possesses. Without someone walking ahead to set the pace we may never have the courage to make our mark, to make our difference, to be on our journey.

We make mistakes, but those mistakes curve the way we are, without them the ride wouldn't have been a journey. The errors we make ultimately change the way we behave, feel and

think, it is those errors that are the scaffolding to our value, attitudes and beliefs. Without faults we would not learn, we would not be the people we have become. Without them life would be meaningless and tedious. Embrace opportunities, live spontaneously, live for the moment that is, stop worrying about the future, stop letting the past dictate the now, enjoy the journey without the worry of the destination.

So perhaps Steven Tyler is right, he lives an interesting journey, he has undoubtedly made mistakes, he has and is discovering his own destination, he doesn't live to regret the past, but most importantly he doesn't waste his energy on the absorption of the destination, and yet feels fulfilment on the journey he has and is taking.

The focus needs to be deferred from the target and concentrated on the journey, the experiences and the lessons that life provides.



**Eliza Harrison** wrote this in 2008 when she was in Year 11 at Bendigo Senior Secondary College in Victoria.