



By: Rica Dujon

Changing Times

Living abroad for a couple of years and coming back to Singapore has brought great changes and experiences for my family and I. Times have changed and so are the people and places. People in today's time are better educated, civil, and more competitive whenever business and money are involved.

With the vast development happening in the country, everything seems to be on fast tracks that technology and design has taken over the traditional ways of living influencing most of my friends. They were able to improve their standard and quality of living by renovating their homes, expanding their businesses, purchasing the latest gadgets and the likes.

The aspect that attracted my attention was the conscientious attitude of the new immigrants who came to Singapore, a few years ago. In my opinion, they are considered an asset to the society for they have made the life of the locals more convenient. With their sweat and toil, they were able to gain respect for their reliability in most thing that they do. Being a food lover, I have visited many restaurants particularly serving Chinese cuisine to savor the different delights and its signature dishes of higher standard and goodness.

One day while I was doing my usual routine, walking around the neighborhood purchasing fruits for my family and myself. A particular food stall caught my eye. It was brightly lit and the food was placed in different containers and boy, it sure looked scrumptious from a distance. I walked towards the stall to see what dishes they were currently serving. Soon after I was ordering a meal. For a moment I thought to myself, this must have cost me eight dollars at least! But to my surprise, "Excuse me Sir, that would be three dollars and fifty cents."

I was excited and curious as to what and how the food would taste like. And as soon as I took the first bite, I found myself being on a cloud nine. It was so delicious that I was lost for words. Sometimes in life, we tend to neglect the small things that we have or that is happening around us. One good example is the food culture that we have in Singapore. It compliments the society because "good food" doesn't always need to be costly most of the time.

On that same fine day while I was eating my meal, a doctor friend of mine approached me. "Ross, How is it going? I haven't seen you awhile." I replied, "I'm doing great. How about you?" He looked down and spoke softly "I am facing huge boulders and high mountains in my life at the moment. I have lost... a huge sum that I have earned over the years due to the stock market crash and economic crisis." He then added, "Trying to do the right things in order to secure the future was not the proper way to live my life to the fullest but to enjoy the quality of life when I was still financially stable. Ross, how I really wished... I could turn back the time."

I looked up to him and replied, "Well, it's never to late to start over again. You can always move on with your life and job. You see, Life, as we know it has its ups and downs. You can't always have it your way. Do remember that things do happen for a reason and for your case, it is trying to teach you something that you, yourself have to figure it out." He took the path of "earn to live" like there is no tomorrow rather than "learn to live."

The best way to learn life lessons are actually by going through difficulties, challenges and struggle that helps us mold ourselves to become a better person. Many people fail to appreciate the goodness that is already present in their lives, forgetting to make the best out of it. Hence, they end up taking things for granted. While the less fortunate struggles to make a living in order to support them selves and family on a meager income.