

'O' Level 2014

Which person has the greatest influence in your life at the present time, and why?

About a year ago, I found myself down in the dumps. I was disappointed with my grades, worried about my increasing waistline, and feeling betrayed by a girl whom I had thought was my best friend. It was at this low point that my mother swooped in to the rescue, despite my generally sulky demeanour and resistance to all good advice. Over the past year, I have found myself turning to her time and again for her wisdom, empathy and encouragement. My mother has the greatest influence on my life at the moment, and I would not change it for the world.

My mother's wise words have become catchphrases for me to live by, especially when I find myself in a rut. As an organised, active person who is always busy doing something useful, my mother has tried to teach me how to be efficient without burning out. The subject at school which has always been my weak point has been Math, and I grew tired of failing to the point where I was ready to give up. Mom, on the other hand, would not give up on me. She talked to me of the benefits of working on something slowly but surely, akin to chiselling away at a hard rock daily until one day, a beautiful sculpture appears. At that time, I did not want to chisel away at anything. I wanted results, and I wanted them fast. I did not like being or feeling like a failure. Grudgingly however, I took my mom's advice and started the daily, gruelling practice of my most hated subject. A year later, I am no mathematician, but I am at least passing and no longer feel defeated. I have my mom to thank for not just her advice but her action plan - and for pushing me every day.

My mother continues to make a huge impact on my life as she knows how to provide encouragement without being overbearing. Sometimes even more than words, her actions make a difference to the way I am uplifted. I reached a point last year, as I imagine every other teenager around me did, when I was incredibly self-conscious about my looks, and especially my weight. A doughnut too many coupled with a deep disdain for any form of exercise had rendered me a little bit overweight, much to my horror. My mother realised what a toll my weight was taking on my mental health, and started off by talking to me about how I felt about it, and if I wanted help to do anything about it. Together, we came up with an action plan which involved a healthier diet coupled with exercise. On days when I wanted to slack off, my mom would appear in my room with fruits instead of chocolate, as well as praise for how far I had come. She became my cheerleader in the living room whenever I huffed and puffed my way through a home workout session. Today, a year later, I am much fitter and healthier thanks to my mom's morale boosting words and actions.

Yet another reason that my mom is the greatest influence in my life, is her great capacity for empathy, both for me and others. I have seen her show great understanding towards others in her job as a counsellor and to me whenever I face emotional struggles. A year ago, I found out that a friend whom I had considered near and dear had been gossiping about me behind my back, making fun of my life and choices. Kids I barely knew seemed to suddenly know intimate details about my life, and this betrayal left me feeling shaken and alone. My mother could see that I was struggling, and in her calm way, had conversations with me that brought me back to my centre. She told me that friends come and go, and that I had learnt an important lesson about trust. She informed me that people would always gossip, and that it would be up to me to hold my head high and keep walking through life regardless of traitors and gossip mongers. My mother's empathy and counsel got me through a very dark period of emotional upheaval, and her kindness continues to make a deep impression on me.



Curio.sg
Powered by The Sapience Method

Many amazing people have been influential in my life thus far, and I feel truly blessed to have had teachers, aunts, uncles and friends who have brought such joy to my life. I am proud to state that the person who makes the greatest impression presently however, is my mom. Her common sense, emotional support and deep understanding have been instrumental in developing the person I am today. I remain inspired by my mother, and hope to become as much like her as possible someday.