

Michaela Žureková

High School
Senecká 2, Pezinok

I was born in 17/12/1991 in Bratislava, but now I live in Pezinok, where I attend grammar school. Next year, I will have graduated and I would like to study journalism (I have chosen media communication or Slovak language and literature as an alternative), so I do not treat writing as just a hobby; I would like to do it professionally and improve myself.

Some people grow and others only grow old

1. A number is not only an age, and an age is not only a number?

There is nothing more simple and yet exhausting as telling something to an adult, especially considering the particular personality and various character traits of the addressee. It is simple because there is a wide spectrum of adulthood, from which one can choose. On the other hand, it is exhausting because telling something to each and every group basically means telling something to the entire human race.

Therefore, it is practically impossible to tell with certainty, to whom the following words belong. Although they are aimed at a seventy year old senior on a pension, they may yet resonate with an eighteen year old whose wisdom teeth haven't started to grow yet.

J. A. Komenský once said that a grown person is capable of carrying out life's mis-

sions. He forgot to define what, according to him, life's mission is. I believe that life's mission is that which each one of us decides it should be, and we act according to how much importance we place on it.

Life's mission is subject to change. In every age we select our goals, and in every age in which we pursue these goals, whether x, y, or z, we momentarily become adults. In some of us this momentary activity takes on a permanent form.

2. Be who you want to be, but...

We categorize, whoever and whenever. We do not exclusively categorize people based on prejudices that we carry within us and that may be reflections of past experiences.

If our thirteen year old neighbor wears flowery hair clamps, we tell her "*stop being childish!*" If a five year old boy saves

the life of his own father, we see him as a hero and his actions as grown up. A bit strange, no? We have the feeling that we understand and know everything, and that the patent for placing people in certain categories is held by us. Therefore, be whoever you want to be, but you will find yourself in some group within our society, perhaps even amongst the adults.

3. As we yell into the valley, we hear from the valley

We youngsters can be a mirror. We have possibilities that our parents or grandparents didn't even dream of. We have ways of expressing ourselves and showing the world its own face. The freedom to shout out all our internal thoughts, to the empty air or to any given audience. Today it is you adults who are listening, who want to understand us, and who still possess the ability to understand our souls. You tell yourself that you already have our experiences behind you and so it shouldn't be hard to decipher the puzzles we face and the actions we take. Yet, if you listen carefully, you will realize one thing: you cannot send a message to adults; it is only possible to send a message to people.

Formally you are adults, but the greater your number of years, the faster is the process of forgetting about your own youth, how you felt when you experienced things that only adolescents do, when you believed that a godfather was a prototype of a mafia boss, to later find out it was not so. It is not about reaching a certain age, but about accumulating experiences: learning, falling and getting back up.

4. 1+1 = ?

Supposedly what one learns in his youth, one relearns later on. What is the reasoning behind this reinvention? What is between youth and old age? Emptiness? Or living based on forgetting something learned long ago?

Try to think about what you're actually doing right now. You're sitting, standing or laying down while reading this essay. What are your expectations? Are you swallowing each word or casually breezing through the text? Are you solving a puzzle within your mind or chaotically trying to find reason? Perhaps now you get it, that we do not send messages in straight lines. Maybe this is due to our fears of a misunderstanding, or perhaps due to some other psychological complexes, we do not know how to relate our internal thoughts in the ways we would like. We do not place the words right under your noses, we just are the way we are and you have to read between the lines. Or perhaps this isn't so...

5. Conversations and substitutes

A conversation is sort of like looking for treasure. The whole time we wait till one or the other reaches the goal, gets to the point and finds the answer, which is akin to the most precious prize. No one is actually fully open-minded, even if they have a right to be, they have no need to be. They may even want to be, but they lack the means. Perhaps they have a mouth, but they don't know how to express themselves. Everyone expresses themselves in various ways.

Sometimes we are silent, but despite this we send off signals to the world and hope someone will catch them and un-

derstand us. From a psychological point of view, we even do it unconsciously. Nonverbal communication, mimicking, and actions, of which we aren't fully aware – that is all readable, all it takes is the desire to understand the language, not just to see in it hieroglyphics and accordingly anticipate failure. It is important not only to hear us, but also to listen.

6. A ≠ B and the reverse

Some people grow and others only grow old. Between these two comments there is a thin line and it isn't easy to rightly distinguish between various people. In my words you may mistakenly find signs of how dumb and useless it is to try to convey something to adults. But the truth is actually quite different – it is important to first find a way of referring to things, situations and people.

If there must be a message, than let it be from people to people. If new information is to be related or even taught, it cannot be from a young generation from another world to older folk on their own planet, but between beings of the same value.

7. Let us memorize a poem

Already in school we practice memorizing poems and songs. In elementary school we recited *Marínu*, and in high school *Mor ho!* Yet, later on in life, there is no one who would force themselves to do the same. Our ability to remember things in the long-term slowly fades away, whether we like it or not.

The pieces in our lives lose value, like all the essays that eventually end up in the trash, but let's not have them go into one ear and out the other. Let us realize that every one of us has their own objections to problems and sees something else as

important. Hence, we do not have a right to reject others' judgments regarding suffering, happiness, and thankfulness. Simply consider what one holds to be important at that moment. Zuzka from Hornej Dolnej may cry more than others from the death of her puppy, while Andrej from Bratislava is suffering due to the poor performance of his firm. Yes, we all set our own priorities, and that is precisely why we cannot judge them. They are all important.

8. Messaging service

So what should the right message to adults (or to people, or to the world) sound like? An incomplete description of our opinions, or more likely sentences that avoid directly addressing the issue, so that everyone has something to think about? Perhaps it should be a conversation involving at least two people. Let us forget about the fact that we are able to unite and convey messages on paper or via email, neither of which we are capable of communicating in person. Let us get together and talk out loud about whatever we want to.

Let us forget that adults one day decided that: If you won't tell it to me, write it to me! Because they don't have time to listen. Let us find the time. Let's stop and show everyone around that they mean something to us, that they aren't merely another cog. Let us forget for a moment that we are adults, because no one really knows what that means anyway. We should stop stressing the things others expect of us and start stressing the things we expect of ourselves. Dear adults... I am 18 years old. My message to you is that I do not yet know exactly what that means. But I am trying to recognize myself and I am open to the world. This is enough for me at the moment.