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Wisdom: The Path of Choice

Virtue is the notion of an individual's morality and their upheld values of living life. As humans, we are faced with many choices and one has to choose. An individual with virtue morals would choose a decision that ponders on kindness, generosity, or courage. Knowledge is acquired through choices, Aristotle (330BCE/ 1941a) states, "Every art and every inquiry, and similarly every action and pursuit, is thought to aim at some good...In medicine, this is health, in strategy victory, in architecture a house, in any other sphere something else, and in every action and pursuit the end" (Strait, L. Paul, & Wallace, 1). Wisdom is a human-made creation that comes from good judgment. Art and inquiry form from the wisdom and as Aristotle states it has an end. I believe wisdom is our performance as human beings to better ourselves. There is a beginning and an end to an inquiry yet more questions will rise replacing it with a new inquiry. As a student, I hold the virtue, wisdom. I believe that wisdom is important to obtain and offer it back. Wisdom is to know or to distinguish between right from wrong. One event in my life has been choosing my career path of being an elementary teacher. I was faced with unique challenges that made me consider teaching. In this essay, I will explore the fundamental concept of wisdom and how it relates to my educational path.

Wisdom is a virtue of good judgment and goes beyond the practical knowledge one receives in a classroom setting. The content which the student receives does not necessarily test the virtue. It is the skills the students obtain over time through practice and righteousness. During my time in high school, I was shy and preferred to be in my comfort zone. Right out of high school, I started college at LaGuardia Community College. A community college was not in my plan and it was a bit disheartening to see my classmates receiving acceptances to Ivy League

colleges. LaGuardia Community College gave me the opportunity to reshape who I am today, a confident student. I am glad to start my wisdom experience at a community college since it taught me to be humble and appreciate other CUNY students' hard work. In order to experience wisdom, I had to step out of my comfort zone. "It is the skills we learn, not the content of our arguments that can best improve all of our lives. While policy comparison skills are necessarily learned through debate in one way or another, those skills are useless if they are not grounded in the process actually used to make good decisions" (Strait, L. Paul, & Wallace, 5). Outside the comfort zone is where the authentic experience took place. I became the secretary of Phi Theta Kappa honor society and made myself involved around campus. I wanted to give back to this community. My professors gave me the courage to speak in class and I wanted to use these skills outside the class as well. I worked with a group of students and we became leaders as we planned events and went to conferences to talk about our accomplishments. Through obtaining leadership skills, I was able to make good decisions that impacted me positively in the long-term such as considering furthering my education.

In LaGuardia Community College, I was able to practice the virtue of wisdom. As I began my journey at Queens College, I no longer was that shy student who was afraid to ask questions in class. The fundamental concept of wisdom taught me to appreciate the wisdom I am able to obtain in the present moment. The teachers that put extra effort into teaching made me excited to learn more. Aristotle (330BCE/1941a) argues:

The origin of action—its efficient, not its final cause—is choice, and that of choice is desire and reasoning with a view to an end... Intellect itself, however, moves nothing, but only the intellect which aims at an end and is practical; for this rules the productive

intellect as well, since everyone who makes for an end, and that which is made is not an end in the unqualified sense (Strait, L. Paul, & Wallace, 4).

I choose to do Elementary Education at Queens College because I desire to serve others. As an immigrant and a second-language learner, learning English is one of my favorite memories to have. My public school teachers were welcoming and enthusiastic for me to learn and speak. Wisdom is a powerful tool that I want to share and as a future educator, I look forward to doing so. The day I teach a student to read, write, or speak English is the day, my life will make a full circle. Wisdom is an important virtue to practice in my life since it offers me purpose and to be involved in a community. Through choices, I was able to come with the outcome that I feel contentment with today. Angle and Slote argue, “Ethics in the largest sense not only asks about moral right and wrong and moral good and evil, but also considers questions about the good life...Thus, when we praise resourcefulness and strength of purpose as individual virtues, we don’t necessarily think of these qualities of character as specifically moral (83-84).” Wisdom is an everyday virtue in which big and small decisions are involved. I decided to not miss out on opportunities and made wisdom an everyday task to accomplish my goal of becoming a teacher.

Through unique perspectives throughout my educational life, I am able to appreciate wisdom when it is offered to me. According to Beadle and Kelvin, “‘Work’ has a range of possible meanings. For Aristotelians, it can equate to Aristotle's *ergon*. If so, work should be inherently meaningful because it is characteristically human activity in which human beings can find fulfillment and completion. Conversely, it can mean activity involving exertion (de Grazia 1962: 39) or labour” (434). Through labor, we are able to search for the meaning of life and experience meaningful interactions. Academia is an institution in which work is preserved. Through skilled practices, we become experts of wisdom as we explore choices and turn them

into a positive reinforcement. Beadle and Kelvin further write, “The relationship between work orientation and work meaningfulness is two-way, participation in practice-type occupations can change our understanding of the meanings available from work and the meanings with which we invest work contribute to our orientation towards it” (444). As I uphold the virtue of wisdom, I must be thankful rather than questioning the place I am receiving the wisdom within. Wisdom can be found anywhere, even in the small corners of the earth, therefore, I must be prepared to participate. Learning is important in order to shape oneself to their higher self. Through my unique experience in higher education, I push myself to keep thriving and hold myself to a greater standard than yesterday because new challenges will arise and I must be ready to choose the righteous path of wisdom.

Works Cited

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