

**Hong Kong Secondary School English Writing competition**

**2015-2016**

**Topic: caring for all**

**{Senior division}**

Presented by  
Lee Ting Kwan  
4B (8)

SKH Tang Shiu Kin Secondary school

**[Thank you for my life]**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am an ordinary man, who had received a great gift from you. You may be curious of my identity. You have given me a new life and a second chance. I am writing to thank you

If you turn on the television, you may see young men being brought out in black mask and handcuffs from nightclubs. They were thought to be immature “party animals” who had dishonored themselves

Mind-blowing fact: I was one of them.

Being raised by a pair of well-respected barristers, I, Jason Cullen, was toppled by tons of opinions, hoping I could one day be as flawless as my parents. Sadly, I have dyslexia and ADHA, which means I could neither be good at handling words nor being able to concentrate as normal people do. Not to mention following in my parents’ footsteps.

Staring at the smooth sea, I drained another can of beer. It was the second year of my college life. To a certain extent, I am successful: being admitted to the Harvard MBA Faculty, having a rather handsome appearance and money. However, deep inside, I am a loser. I never attend classes, barely passed the end-term examination and had befriended some party-lovers. Since then, my life was filled with cocaine, cigarette, heroine, etc. No one cared about me and I cared about no one. I ditched life of school and embraced the world of nightclubs, where I can be satisfied. I remembered one night, when my friends and I were stuffed from vodka, we wandered into a backstreet, stole a car and assaulted cops. After spending two months in jail, I was kicked out of school and ended my life as a university student. After this, my devastated parents used every means to convince me, urged me to resume my life as a student. Reluctantly, I accepted their idea.

This idea fitted perfectly until a warm, spring morning. When I drank four bottles of whiskey in a row.

As soon as I finished, I fainted. I was sent to the A&E immediately. My mind was drowsy, and I had somehow fallen into a life-draining black hole, where time meant nothing to me. During this time of eternal darkness, I thought of my short, useless life; I thought of my parents, awaiting my return; I thought of my friends,

my dream job as a war photographer, my school, my bucket list.... These thoughts had huddled together and mixed into fury and regrets. I regret not having kissed my mother goodbye when we parted, I regret having wasted my time in nightclubs, in drugs and in alcohol...There was so much I wanted to do, there was so much that I failed to do, which I may never have the chance to make up for it. After my two-week coma, my doctor announced that my liver had stopped working, and it had to be replaced immediately. Time was ticking, and my hope for survival was dim.

A yellow, battered-looking file was placed in front of me. With difficulty, I opened it with trembling hands.

It wrote: "Dear Sir, we were pleased to notify you a liver extracted from a deceased man suited your condition. Please sign to confirm the date of operation." I signed the letter, and cried out for relief.

While the operation was proceeding, I had a replay of my own life. From being diagnosed with dyslexia and ADHD, trying heroine for the first time. All scenes were shown vividly before my eyes, at last, darkness spoke: "Do treasure this second chance." Suddenly, my mind had never been so clear and calm. I realized that this liver was a second chance, a chance to regenerate my life. This liver was meant to be the brand new world.

After the surgery, I was discharged and completed a part-time bachelor degree. I started to pursue a career that I had dreamt of: War photographer. Being a war photographer, I dived deep into war zones and battlefields. Though this was not a profitable job, I'd learnt a lot of lessons, about life and death. I realized there were countless people from all around the earth, craving for attention and care. When we were mourning on the so-called life obstacles, we have not thought of people who are still suffering in the third world, struggling to meet their basic needs. Being a photographer, I was to uncover the truth, digest and expose it to people. While I was working in warzones, watching innocent people die in pain and agony, I thought about my fallen past. These made me guiltier of myself, but being more thankful to you. I would be lying under a headstone. I wouldn't have experienced the true beauty of life, I wouldn't be a truth-finder, I wouldn't have a second chance to stand up again. Thank you for every possibility you've given me through donating me the organ.

Thank you for my life.

Yours,  
Jason Cullen