In junior high school, I encountered the biggest “crisis” of overcoming the tremendous academic pressure. The pressure had kept mounting ever since I was assigned to join the best class in our grade, a class with top-ranked students and the fiercest competition.

It reached to the point when I could not take it anymore, and I remember running out of home after an intense quarrel about my academic performance with my parents. On an impulse, I rushed out the door and wandered aimlessly on the streets. As I was immersed in my negative emotions, my attention was suddenly caught by the notification on my phone: “Music of the day: The Nights by Avicii.”

“He said one day, you’ll leave this world behind, so live a life you will remember.” The inspiring lyrics and uplifting melody flew into my ears as I hit the play button, and I immediately felt it struck a chord within me. That very night, something life-changing happened to me, igniting an inner spark in me and leading me to take a different approach in life.

After I returned home, I spent the whole night reflecting and looking into my previous mistakes, negative perceptions of the heavy coursework, and reluctance to embrace failures while learning valuable experiences from them. I realized that all the obstacles and challenges were actually key pathways to my growth. Upon straightening my mind, I took solid actions to strive for personal development, including redefining my academic goals, dissecting long-term objectives into measurable and more specific tasks, developing a positive mentality, and communicating with people around me to seek words of wisdom in navigating through difficult times.

Bearing the new life attitude, I became more driven and motivated in all aspects of my life, well beyond the classroom, and I enthusiastically engaged in diverse new activities, such as testing my academic skills through competitions like the Euclid Mathematics Contest, conducting scientific research on machine learning models, and making game videos to share my love for Minecraft, etc. Through each experience, I believe I am moving forward with exuberant passion and a renewed mentality.