

Please choose one of the prompts below and write a brief essay (350-500 words). The essay will help us learn a little more about you, and get a sense of your writing skills and style. Whichever prompt you choose, please be specific.

2. Have you ever had an experience that has changed the way you see the world?  
What was it; what changed?

My name is Binam Kayastha, and I'm a 3rd culture kid who was born in Russia, lived in Ukraine, and is of Nepali Nationality. For a long time, this fact was nothing but a point of conversation. I lived my life in ignorance, for the 12 years I had spent in an American International School, a place, that I called it my second home. There I was the math whiz, the robotics team captain, and playing defensive soccer player known as the "Fighting Sherpa." I was just like any other kid – I had many adventures, and very few goals. You might even say that my high school was a little village from which I rarely left. And from ages 5 to 17, that was the truth. On the summer after my graduation, I realized 4 years passed since my family and I had last visited my home country, and we were soon to revisit. I realized, by this point in my life, I had left behind my language, my aunts and uncles, my beloved grandpa who passed away, and my country. I realized that I had left a story behind.

As I waked out the door of the plane, I felt the humidity and the air dust flow all around me. The airport didn't feel... that hygienic, but in retrospect, not very many places in Nepal were. The environment in Nepal is in a dire state – the streets are trash cans, dust was our air, mud was our water, the capital was a treeless forest of people, and earthquakes were like that annoying friend that keeps coming back when you least expect them to. Things are a mess in our country, and it took me 17 years to realize it.

Other than hygiene, Nepal's current education is very low. And although I knew that the average literacy rate is 65.5%, I never understood what that meant until I saw a villages on hills and secluded parts of the country, that had minimal to no access to education. When I saw kids who would walk every day for 3 hours to get to school back and forth up and down a hill, it made me realize how lucky of a person I am, and how much I wanted to help my people.

On the airport back to Ukraine, I looked around and upon seeing more Nepalese people any other nationality, I realized for the first time that in this country I was no longer in the minority. I couldn't help but thinking over and over again that this is where I belong, this is my true home. Having my eyes finally open, I established that I'm a 3rd culture kid who finally has a goal of saving the world from the poverty of the environment and education. My name is Binam Kayastha, and I will not leave any more stories behind.