

**Sonali Gupta**  
**First Place**

Life would be insanely difficult if I did not love what I did. After all, how long can I not love what I do for most of my time? Would I love to do something better? Absolutely! I love making improvements in what I do. Will I love what I do after it gets better? Of course! Do I love the challenges encountered in this journey? Yes, most of the times, if not all the times. Someone rightly said that it's not about the destination but it's about the journey to get there. I believe people succeed if they love what they do and they do what they love. One may ask about the definition of success. I agree with Raj Sisodia, a professor at Babson College, who defined success as "living my true purpose and having a positive impact on the lives of people by uplifting them and inspiring them to think and act in ways that they may not have considered before." When we look at the history and founders of Facebook, Google, Apple, or any other company and ask how they were started, what hurdles the founders faced in the infancy days of the company, and how they overcame adversity and challenges, the answer to all the questions will be the unwavering passion for what they do and believe in. The same can be said about an individual sitting in an isolated corner cube in an office building. You can see enthusiasm in people who have passion for what they do. They will make great strides in their careers and enjoy their work life and home life. They may feel isolated at times in their journey, but not for very long. The best part is that they have infectious personalities. They bring other people under their wings and teach them the value behind the quote "Love what you do, and do what you love". Mahatma Gandhi was considered the Bapu (Father) of India, but it wasn't because he was old. People realized that Gandhi cared about them just like a father who takes care of his kids in the best possible way. Gandhi stated that "I know the path. It is straight and narrow. It is like the edge of a sword. I rejoice to walk on it. I weep when I slip. God's word is: 'He who strives never perishes.' I have implicit faith in that promise. Though, therefore, from my weakness I fail a thousand times, I will not lose faith, but hope that I shall see the Light when the flesh has been brought under perfect subjection, as some day it must." When I hear the loud commotion from a soccer game in a park in my neighborhood, I realize immediately that there is a least one kid, if not many, on the field who has a passion for the big ball. It is this child who can run a full 60 minutes chasing the ball in the scorching summer heat. One can conquer any obstacle by loving what one does. And at the same time, one can enjoy life by doing what one loves. The quote "Love what you do, and do what you love" is not a fallacy of modern times, but it is a time-tested philosophy.

**Sai Sumana Kaluvai**  
**Second Place**

Life Question 1: In order to be successful one must become a\_\_\_\_\_? a) Engineer b) Doctor c) Lawyer

Trick Question: The reality is many of us don't want nor need to pursue these jobs to be 'successful'—myself included. The proof of success is not what our bank accounts depict; rather it is our happiness with the status quo that determines success. The past four years I have done everything in my control to make sure I had a spotless academic portfolio- from numerous AP classes, a high GPA, and an impeccable student record. However, from first glance at my "resume" no individual could detect my happiness level or what activities I truly loved. Similarly, no employer can truly gauge from a simple resume if a future worker will be happy in their workplace. The idea of "Love what you do, and do what you love" is rarely followed but crucial for one's well-being. In our fast paced society, individuals look at the end goal and work all their life for this 'goal', no matter how much pain the path will cause. I have often heard my peers claim that they want to become Doctors even though they are terrified of the workload and dislike science—simply because they will get a "fat" pay check. The race to the top of the socio-economic ladder has caused many to abandon their passions. However, going down a path of misery to get material benefits will lead to a loss of love for life. Those who love their job and daily activities show a level of enthusiasm unmatched in individuals who are ambivalent to their daily activities. Personally, when I discovered my passion for teaching I couldn't let go- every activity I pursued I wanted to become a mentor in that field. The impact of education hypnotized me into a world that no one else expected me to venture. This is when I truly understood the fact that "love is blind." We are all bound to fall in love with something unexpected and the drive that envelops our body can lead us to become pioneers in field we are passionate about. Through my involvement in different extracurricular activities, I've experienced the impact that education has on children. Educational service projects have altered my view on my intended career path. As president of National Honor Society I have organized events to help raise money to expand the tutoring center. This project made me realize that many students and teachers need help on our campus. To target this pervasive problem I started a Monthly Project through Key Club called "Teacher-Help Day". Key Clubbers help tutor, clean, organize and assist in any manner the teacher requests. Our project has garnered support on campus and made me appreciate the effort teachers put into ensuring their classes are positive environments for students. Additionally, as Vice President, I ran fundraisers for this year's Key Club "Outreach to Teach Event"- when we donate school supplies to 60 underprivileged students at Lincoln First Street Elementary School. However, after organizing events to help students and teachers, I realized that I wanted to be more directly involved. So I signed up to be a Chemistry Teacher Intern. As an intern I set up labs, grade and most importantly teach lessons. This exposure to the teaching environment made me realize my passion for helping and serving in the classroom. I want to go into the teaching field because I hope to help students enjoy a subject. My aim is to become an Introductory College Chemistry Professor. I want to help students enjoy their first major exposure to chemistry and make them feel comfortable with an academically challenging subject. If students are not taught in an engaging manner when they are first exposed to a subject, they are at risk of disliking and losing interest in that field of study—I want to prevent this from happening to students in College Chemistry Courses. If I hadn't participated in these educational service events, I would've never discovered my love for teaching. These experiences made me realize that sometimes Life's Questions are best answered when you get to define the answer choices based on what you truly love and enjoy. Life Question 1: Answer: d) None of the Above- I want to be Chemistry Professor.