



# 2019 Ben Strauss Youth Program

## Middle School

### Teen Essay Contest

# Sara Noll

## Why Me?

Lots of people take life for granted. Some smoke. Some take drugs. It's like people go and throw their life away, not thinking of the result. However, life is precious. It's like a glass bird. It's a beautiful addition to the world. On the other hand, even the slightest bump can cause that bird to come crashing to the ground, shattering into thousands of pieces.

When I was eight years old, I loved going to McDonald's with my sister and my grandparents. We would laugh and play with the toy from our happy meal. I remember that around New Year, my grandfather got me a microscope for Christmas. After we went out for dinner we came home and played with it for hours. Everything was calm.

Then two years later, about a week before Christmas, my grandfather went to the hospital. I wasn't that worried, thinking maybe he forgot his medicine. That was my mistake. My parents knew his cancer had come back. They knew he was losing in a race with death. Someone told them he had months to live. Within two days, someone told them he had weeks. Then he had days. They knew as hard as he ran, he would lose to death. They thought he would die maybe three days after Christmas, so they didn't tell us. They didn't want to ruin our Christmas.

Christmas Eve came, and I was sad that he wouldn't be able to celebrate. However, the presents! The candy! The giant feast! I was so excited when my other grandparents came to take us to church. When we came back to our grandparents house excited for dinner, we found out that Poppop had died.

At first, I thought that they were playing a really mean joke. However, soon reality came crashing down onto me.

I was outraged. How could they keep that from us? They didn't want to ruin our Christmas?!

Christmas came and it just wasn't the same. Poppop would always be the one cracking jokes and making everyone smile. However, we did meet a lot more of our dad's side of the family.

At the same time, it can be really hard at times. The first time I went to McDonald's after pop-up had died I cried a lot. It makes me very angry how some people take this life for granted. When other people lose so much. A few good things that come out of this though. My grandmother got a dog. His name is Polo and he's very protective. My aunt and uncle communicate with us much more and now my whole family is there to help each other. Christmas time still is a hard time for our family, but each year we have Christmas at our house. This year was the very first-year, polo stayed over at our house.(for Christmas) Polo also discovered linoleum. He ran across our kitchen floors and he slid every direction. I feel like the poor dog was traumatized.

In school, I get weird looks because I'm not excited for Christmas. However, when the kids understand why they are much more understanding of me.

During my first year of middle school I met a wonderful girl named Anna. We both love reading and she keeps me out of trouble. I feel like Anna is my guardian angel sent to me from my grandfather.

I have learned that even when the going gets tough you have to keep going.