

Educated Essay

Many times I question what the point of an education is. A lot of my friends are currently in college on the pathway to become doctors, looking forward to healing people. My mother learned how to make pastries to follow her passions to bake and feed people. My father learned complicated STEM topics so as an engineer he can apply them to creatively solve problems. With these examples, as well as Tara Westover's *Educated*, education is brought into a light that makes it out to be much more than merely a tangible degree or a classroom setting.

In the chapter "The Substance of Things," Tara tries to confront her Dad about the abuse Shawn has inflicted on her throughout the years. This, a powerful climax, shows the point where Tara is able to finally draw the line between her past, delusional self and the mature, "educated" woman she is now. She can see that what she has been experiencing is not normal or acceptable, and she can make the right decisions for herself without the voice of her Dad in her head. Through her experiences outside of her toxic home, Tara's education -- in school and in life in general -- has allowed her to challenge and go beyond what has been her sense of comfort, security, and certainty; she now sees the world for how it is on her own, without the radical views of her family skewing her thoughts anymore. Her choice to venture out simply depended on the strength of her uncertainty and how she will use it to drive her decisions going forward.

This is not to say that the old Tara does not live as a part of the new Tara. The sense of progress in an individual is an important intrinsic factor for one to keep going in life. For example, teaching herself algebra was no small feat but her passion to learn about what she did not know is what proved to excite herself the most. We see later in college, Tara's learning about what the holocaust through an embarrassing moment and merely the internet was an overwhelming concept. She was infuriated with her mother that events such as this were happening all over the world without her knowing, but this extra knowledge drove her to find out more about the vast world she had yet to explore. With a mature approach, Tara having peace knowing and remembering where she has come from serves a constant reminder of what she **has** and **is** capable of accomplishing in the long run. Whether her journal with the painful accounts of abuse or her increasingly radical family members berating her, one can still consider these being as important as the support and strength offered by the bishop or Dr. Kerry.

Trying to serve her self fulfillment of being much more than an herbalist midwife or a radical survivalist, Tara's education ultimately satisfies an intrinsic purpose whether she is conscious of it or not. Not to mention that her education is still an ongoing process today, where learning plays an integral role in showing and growing who she is through the decisions she makes and actions she takes. This can be applied to my UD experience, ensuring I get the best out of my own education. As I am on the path to dental school, I will keep in mind that getting into graduate school or having my own office one day are merely at the surface level of goals I am to accomplish. Rather, the character I am building along the way with every decision made, and the people I will meet can have indelible impacts on me. I simply need to be willing to try on my own and have the courage to be truly educated.