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I Believe in the Color Orange

I believe in taking life at face value and living my life to the fullest.

On November 15, 2011, I suffered the death of a fairly close friend of mine who died suddenly of congenital heart failure. Obviously this came as a shock not to only me, but to his family, our mutual friends in recovery and our family members. It certainly was not fair, and still doesn't seem real. However, it did seem to teach me a lesson: You Only Live Once.

Following Nick's passing, I was struggling with the question of why God would do such a thing. How could God cut such a young boy's life short and expect things to continue on in a normal, mundane routine. I soon realized, I had been taking my life for granted, and the passing of a young friend was my wake up call.

I've started taking each day at face value, and have attempted to live out my life as he would. Nick had the most infectious smile and it was nearly impossible not to laugh whenever he spoke. He was one of the most loving and genuine people I have ever gotten to know.

I now vow to live my life as he would.

I have come to understand the true meaning of life and death and the fine line that separates them. We only have one life and it would be entirely too foolish not to make the best of it. I've attempted to approach life more graciously versus my previous sense of entitlement, because I'm an only child of course.

There is never a day that passes that Nick isn't on my mind. He is my moral compass; frequently guiding me in a direction that I would have never even considered if he hadn't been a part of my life.

I believe in spirits and I feel his close to my heart. I believe in second-chances. I believe in attempting to not judge a book by its cover and giving everyone the benefit of the doubt. I believe in loving unconditionally. I believe in serving those in need, just to see the smiles on their faces because deep in my heart I know that is Nick telling me everything will be alright; if not now, in time.

I believe that everyone has a Nick in their life, strategically put there by God to better their own lives. In the twenty short years Nick lived, he was capable of living them out more fully than I will ever be able to. I believe in orange, because that was his favorite color and his memory lives on. I believe in angels and I am now lucky enough to have one of my own: I call him Nick.