

## **Geoff Young**

### *Rejuvenation*

The lessons learned in ELI have given me a better understanding of who I am and who I want to be. I have kept my head in books since I came to UK and now that I took "time out" to see what the world (or at least campus) is like outside of my books, I am a better person. I finally believe that I am closing in on my potential and place in this world. The things that were important to me as a child are still important to me, but as I became older other things overshadowed the important things in my life. Now with an enormous boost from ELI, my childhood aspirations have become my current aspirations. I discovered that ELI was inspiring me to put my goals before other objectives in my life that do not seem so important. The ELI sessions have allowed me to develop my sense of personal awareness, ability to help others, and understanding my environment (i.e. campus).

When I came to UK, I thought my experience here would not leave a strong impression on me in either direction: favor or dislike. I continued to feel this way until I joined ELI. The sessions allowed me to open-up and care about what is going on around me. The mindfulness session with Dr. Brunner was very eye opening because I always thought that nobody who took life serious actually practiced meditation. Even though Dr. Brunner was very mindful of his environment, he also appeared to be very aware of life outside of the mindful realm. During this session, I found myself meditating and forgetting the many things that cloud my mind. I became very relaxed and capable of finding my childhood goals hidden behind all the clutter in my mind. At this point, I was

making a commitment to revitalize my long-lost intentions. After this rejuvenation, I felt like a new man because my life seemed like it had more of a purpose.

The mindfulness session proved to be very helpful in reviving my project because it was at a standstill before the session, but afterwards I realized what direction I wanted to go with it. I determined that high school students should benefit the most from my project, but I wanted to gain from this experience, too. Only after the project, I realized that my benefits came from the contacts I made with people. These people were very excited to help the high school students and me accomplish our goals of becoming lawyers. I learned that many people support an idea or even a person when they believe they are sincere and important. As a result of this enlightenment, I have made a promise to myself to never become involved with someone or something that I believe is not genuine.

Perspective has been another important aspect of ELI: others and mine. I have always been careful to not have a single perspective on any issue. Since I am striving to be a lawyer, I realize the importance of being able to see an issue from many different perspectives. I thought that many people tried to see someone else's perception, but the session on diversity revealed that I was a minority in my thinking. Also, the exercises from this session allowed me to realize that many people do not notice that different viewpoints are caused by different backgrounds. Even though I knew this fact, I could tell that it came as a revelation to many people in the class. I have always know that I was a minority and did not have many advantages, but apparently many people did not realize that being a minority is a disadvantage until this moment. Although I did not learn that much about diversity, this session was extremely important because it felt really

rewarding to see many of my classmates (including myself) recognize a different perspective.

The entire ELI experience has been very exciting and influential to my progress at this university and in my life. During the semester, I have come to terms with many things in my life. I have identified my potential and now I'm trying to live up to my maximum potential. Instead of constantly worrying about school and work, I want to strive to have a better personal life with my soon-to-be wife and just enjoy my life. Throughout the course we have been told that leaders do not have to be famous or charismatic, all they need is to be able to realize who they are and extend their gifts to others who may need guidance. I have just realized who I am, and now the fun begins because I am going to share my gifts with everyone who needs my gift.

"The PURPOSE of life is to discover your gift.

The MEANING of life is giving your gift away."

— David Viscott Psychiatrist and writer Cited in BITS & PIECES