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Age: 17 years old.

Right. Left. Right. Left. My feet keeps on going in the rhythm right, left, right, left. My heart pounds like a hammer that tries to tear off my chest. The sweat is running down my face. Suck the air in, blow it out. I have to be the fastest.

Right. Left. Right. Left. I need to get away from what I left behind. The sadness, failures, disappointments, traumas, the taunts, the disdain.

Right. Left. Right. Left. Those cruel voices. Those hurtful feelings. Why do I still see them? Why do I still hear it? No matter how far I go, they are chasing after me, haunting me, waving their hands at me from the sidewalks, and what's worse? I don't even know if they are waiting for me ahead or not. If at the end, everything's still the same just like when it is started, why should I continue to do this?

Then, there's a debate going on my head.

"Come on, you gotta move forward. When you reach your destination, you will thank yourself,"

"Does that 'destination' even exist? I've been through so much, but nothing changes. I'm tired."

Now all my movements are still. The heartbeat becomes normal. Calm down. This is not a race. Take your time. Maybe I can just stay here, having some time to myself to think about those choices. Stop here and go back, or risk moving forward?

I started running when I received a birthday wish from my best friend. And this is what it said, "HBD. Hope you would be a cute friend of mine forever. And I seriously hope that you would enjoy your life more. Xoxo" I shouted out right after I finished reading it, "Of course, I enjoy my life. I really do." The way I find it 'enjoying' is to stay by myself at home and have a good book on my hands, and when I told this to anyone they would say exactly the same sentence. "Seriously, you need to enjoy your life more." At first, I didn't understand why they said that, but I found out later that their meaning of 'enjoying' is to go out, meet and talk to people, or have fun at someone's

party, which are the things that I feel uncomfortable doing. Yes, I am an introvert. And my best friend and everyone who told me to enjoy my life are extroverts, the type of people whom I was really jealous of, because I thought our societies tend to prefer the extroverts. You can see it in your everyday life. Who is chosen to be the leader of the team? Who is the most popular in the group? Who do other people want to stay around? Isn't it the extrovert? I hate being introverted. And I told myself that from now on, I will do whatever it takes to be extroverted. That's how I started running.

After struggling to change myself for a year, I realized that nothing changes. I was still an introvert and needed to charge myself up every time after I go out socializing. I tried everything. I pretended to be super happy and lively all day when I was with the crowd, tried to be more outgoing, talked to strangers and all of my classmates every day, because I hoped all these things would help. But no, it didn't make any change. I was discouraged and was going to give up at that time. But I decided to move forward. The reasons why I keep on moving? Because I don't want all my efforts to be useless. Now, you may ask, "What if no matter how hard you try, you are still introverted? What If you do it until you die, but you are still introverted?" Well, have you ever heard "Learn from the past"? This quote helped me a lot when I was afraid that everything I do would be in vain. Because if I think like that, I would tell myself that I was completely wrong. You receive something every time you step forward, whether it be precious lessons, friendships, or new experiences. Those are the things that will guarantee that your effort will pay off. So instead of focusing on the destination, I then focus on the things I collected along the way. I stop being afraid of moving forward.

What I learnt from being a fake extrovert is that being yourself is better than pretending to be someone you are not. Embrace your uniqueness, your true character, your true you. Live the introverted life. Live it happily. Enjoy it. The societies do not prefer extroverts to introverts.

Just changing my attitude takes me a hundred steps forward. Moving on from your discouragements and failures is not that hard. Take them as your invaluable possessions and keep them inside your pocket to remind yourself that you've met them

once, you've gotten over them, and you're not going to meet them ever again. Although I am not extroverted at the end, I felt so much better than being at the starting point where I was jealous of everyone and always blaming myself for being an introvert. I appreciate and love myself more, which, in my opinion, is much better than being an extrovert.

You do not have to take a gigantic step to move forward, but you have to keep on moving. Maybe your destination is just a step ahead. Maybe what you get along the way can fulfill you that you do not need to get to your goal anymore. For the ones who haven't started moving yet, go move forward. There's a lot more to explore. For the ones who are on the way and start to give up, go move forward. The more you fall, the stronger you are. You are not alone. Many of us out there are moving. If the others can do it, you can do it, too. We are moving forward together.

We step out our right feet, then our left feet. Right. Left. Right. Left. We are not rushing, we walk and enjoy the path. And we will not stop. And we will not go back.