

Why I became who I am

Every now and then I wonder why I became the person I am. Of course, it is partly because of my parents' values and DNA. My mom has during the past 10 years served as surrogate mama for almost 20 youngster refugees escaping from war, oppression, poverty and starvation. She, for sure is my role model.

In addition, I also think that my own experiences and observations travelling the world have contributed equally much to develop my personality and beliefs.

Let me tell you a trivial story that I keep in fresh memory. In 1990 – I was only 21 years old – I travelled with the Pink Caravan (Rosa Bussarna). On the day before returning to Sweden I walked the quarters of Giza in Egypt. A young girl on the street approached me with her stretched out hand, begging for money. It hurt me badly that I, carrying a fancy Canon camera, had spent my last Egyptian pound at the pyramid site.

But I had a bottle of fresh water that I gave her. She smiled, hugged me and said "shokran syd" (thank you mister). That moment will never ever be forgotten.

I asked if I could take a photo, pointing at my camera. She nodded. See the photo attached. This is almost 30 years ago, and that moment comes back to me every time I see a beggar outside the supermarket.

