Evelin Ilves Patron of SOS Children's Village

"What is the most important thing in life?" a reporter once asked a musician and a grandfather on a TV programme.

That musician had seen life in its many colourful aspects. A happy childhood on his parents' farm. The rebelliousness of a teenager and the consequences of picking a fight. He even knew what happens if you behave as if nothing depends on you. He became a wild rocker and a music virtuoso who was loved and desired. And he even experienced the seemingly unbelievable feeling that all that rumpus and noise, intoxication and being adored by thousands is not, in fact, happiness.

And realising that he wanted to get away. To the silence. To the woods beyond the sea. And while there he suddenly understood what the most important thing in life was: children. So he became a teacher.

At first glance there are many answers to the question - what is the most important thing in life?

People are, indeed, different, as are the times within and around us.

In each age and stage of life some things stand out and are more important while other things remain in the background.

If a child is surrounded by a loving family, they can probably dream without any restrictions.

But if they're not? People say that those who dare to dream will one day see their dreams come

true.

But if you don't know happiness, how can you dream about it?

There will always be families that fall apart or are broken. Indeed, there are children who have to go on complicated journey lasting many years in order to find a loving home, and it is not certain that they will ever find it.

But it was due to the fact that it is easier to move on together and to help those weaker than you that people started living together as communities thousands of years ago.

In today's modern and often far too hectic world we must remind ourselves of this simple truth over and over again. We're together because it makes us stronger.

And in order to look after the weak.

We should have learned our lesson from the past – in order to realise that children are most important we don't necessarily have to live to an old age. We don't have to conquer big stages or captivate millions of people.

A child doesn't have time to wait. A child lives in the moment, right now and right here, by our side. And this also applies to children who do not have a proper family or a family at all as such. It's as if they belong to all of us. So it's our duty to help all of these children get home so that they can dream about their own happiness. The future of Estonia, our destiny and that of today's helpers, is in the hands of our children.

Come and help SOS Children's Village – our villages are good homes for good children.

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