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An Essay on Empowerment

After last night's shooting in Las Vegas, I've been feeling really lost. I had a friend who was attending the concert, and although she escaped unharmed I know there were so many people who were not as lucky, and so many loved ones who are grieving today. I had a difficult time focusing all day, and it also happened to be a really busy day for me with school and work. Nothing slowed down because of what happened in Las Vegas.

Everything feels insignificant after a national tragedy. I was so, so tempted to shut down and disengage today. In fact, I definitely did for a few hours. I was also really tempted to skip the Project Green Challenge today. What makes this important enough to take my attention away from the deadliest shooting my country has ever seen?

When I got home tonight, I realized why I needed to complete the challenge. In the wake of sadness and anger, I need to be a force of change. I need to lift my own spirits, and I need to do things that make my life worth living—because I may have very little control over when it ends. I am grieving for the lives lost and I am angry that yet again, this is happening. But I will fight for better laws that make our country safer. I will be an example of love to my family, friends, and people I don't know. I will keep hope and work so that the world will get better—because if we don't hope and work towards that, how will anything ever change?

Sustainability is not just about our ecological environment; it is made up from the intertwined fibers of all the systems that surround us. We are each a part of those systems, and our actions matter. While today leaves many of us feeling vulnerable and disempowered, that is not where things end. Organizations like Turning Green and opportunities like the Project Green Challenge allow us to lean on each other, and learn from one another. It allows us to start building societies that are safer, happier, and more sustainable-- and that is something I want to be a part of.