

If I Ruled The World

Luke Evans

Luke Evans is a British actor best known for his roles in such blockbusters as *Clash of the Titans* and *Beauty and the Beast*. He's now releasing his first music album, *At Last*

Recycling would be compulsory. It blows my mind how much plastic one person can accumulate within a week. People should be held accountable for not recycling, as nobody has an excuse to not do it. I went to the slums in Mumbai a few years ago with Save the Children and one had 9 million people living in it. It's next to the biggest rubbish tip in Asia and they can't do anything about it. When you see it, you just think, *My God, is it already too late?* It's a scary prospect.



There'd be a day that all religions celebrate together. I'd call it a Multi-religious Celebratory Day. It would involve capital cities having open days, cathedrals covered in Buddhist shrines and candles, or Buddhist temples having an altar with Jesus Christ on it, just mixing it all up. Religious disagreements cause so many problems in the world—if people could see that we're all on the same track, the world would be a better place.

I'd eliminate animal enclosures. Especially for larger animals such as orcas, whales, dolphins and tigers—they shouldn't be in captivity. I remember going to a zoo when I was about 14 and seeing a polar bear rocking back and forth. This rocking happens in humans as well, it's a sort

of calming solace that we do when we're lost and we have no one to calm us. When you see an animal doing it, it's heart-breaking. The only way [captivity] would work is if we had big safari parks where research and conservation could be carried out in a more fitting environment.

Young people would talk to their elder relatives more. I left home at 16 and made an effort to reach out to my grandparents often. I didn't realise when I was young how important it is to know what they've been through. Young people these days move so fast, and there's so much vanity—it's all about this "selfie" mentality. The truth is, we're all going to get old. If we're lucky, we'll all live to be as old as our grandparents. And wouldn't you like there to be somebody interested in asking you questions when you're their age?

I'd name and shame online bullies. Anonymity on social media and the internet brings the worst possible outcomes: suicide, self harm. There are young people among my family and friends who are suffering from online bullying and they don't know who's bullying them. These people are pathetic, weak cowards and they shouldn't be able to hide behind a fake profile. I'm 40 years old and I've been through a lot in life so it doesn't bother me, but for impressionable young people it must be horrific. They

might be dealing with their hormones, sexuality or a difficult upbringing, and now on top of that there's anonymous bullying. It shouldn't be happening.

Everyone would have a talent. It's very important to find a passion. I don't necessarily mean something life-changing, but everybody should be given the opportunity to find something they love to do because it's like therapy. I love to sing, so when I shower I sing out loud and get out feeling like a different person. It's cathartic. It can be anything: dog walking, gardening, acting, singing, building. We don't do that enough.

Imposing religion on children would be banned. You could only choose a belief when you're old enough to understand what it means. [Faith] should be a personal choice, and if you don't want it at all, that's equally acceptable. When I was 16, I chose not to be part of any organised religion and it's liberating to have made that decision on my own. Religious beliefs influence many aspects of your life—what you eat, how you dress, who you speak to—so it has to be a choice made by you, no one else. Many people don't have that opportunity and suffer because of it. ■

As told to Eva Mackevic

Luke Evans' album *At Last* is out on November 22