



2022 Peer-To-Peer Students Scholarship Application

The Family Counseling Center of Greater Washington

Essay question: The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience? (min. 500 words)

P2P Helper Name: Rick H. Yoon

“Rick, what am I gonna do?? What should I do this weekend, and next weekend, and the one after that?” Connor, an eight-year-old boy with long blonde hair and was one of the most vivacious, ardent campers, from one of my library summer magic camps exclaimed with uneasiness.

Although for Connor, that moment of realization that the summer magic camps were over was melancholy, to me, it was one of the most blissful moments of my life.

It was blissful because, at that moment, I was able to fully confirm that I did my job correctly; I wanted to spread my passion and love for magic, and if that transferred to even one person, it would completely make my day. In this case, Connor, who not only came to all of my different magic library camps(which lasted a total of 6 weeks considering all the different libraries), stayed after to learn and watch more magic from me---I loved this, and I was absolutely eager to help and show Connor more.

Magic is one of the biggest and most important aspects of my life; I was able to meet new people, make new connections, and create the closest friends I have to this day. My deck of custom pasteboards, with numbers and symbols and colors, has created some of the most meaningful memories between me and my audience, and the fact that some pieces of paper can do this is absolutely beautiful, in my humble opinion.

Coming back to America from South Korea after 4 years, the environment, this American culture, was very foreign: very much out of my comfort zone. Looking back, the trembling, second-grade version of myself was full of anxiety, wondering how I would adapt to the very aura that seemed to be always full of uncertainty.

This uncertainty was something of a negative aspect in my eyes; I was constantly worried, and it felt as if in every direction I would walk in, there would be people staring at me, like inescapable cameras covering every possible angle. However, this completely changed when I first encountered magic in a magic shop; its colorful textures and the aura it emitted were tantalizing. It had a "Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory-esque" element to it. What was weird was that the aura from the magic shop was also full of uncertainty, but for some reason... it was different. Different from the one I felt from the uncertainty of the new environment; it was somehow welcoming.



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Coming out of the magic shop and encountering pieces of miracles that I would never forget for the rest of my life, my entire perspective of the new environment of America changed drastically. The uncertainty of the magic I experienced, such as the shrinking penny, was refreshing and allowed my young self to come to an epiphany that this new environment is in no way necessarily negative. In fact, this unfamiliarity of the environment of America was exciting, and it made me feel very optimistic regarding the start of a new life; it's was like watching the beginning of an unfamiliar, intoxicating magic trick, where the magician slowly spreads the cards, but instead of going the cliché path of telling me to "pick a card, any card," he goes onto say something more unexpected: "I want you to merely think of any playing card."

To be more specific, the magic shop visit was one of the most memorable and happiest moments I had during times of hardships living with just my mom. I was desperate to build relationships with my peers, who were still uncomfortable with me, so I decided to take one of the magic tricks I bought from the shop and brought it to school; the very trick that I witnessed as a miracle. On the day of the Show and Tell, I borrowed a copper penny from the teacher, and waving it with a little, square red block, I shrunk it down to a tiny little penny that was 5 times smaller -- everyone in the class was in awe, and started to see me in a different light. However, magic gave me something to hold onto and focus on while I was in a state of confusion and anxiety and also helped me build numerous connections with my, at first, foreign peers and teachers. For that reason, I am still so grateful for having discovered magic then. Since then, magic helped me build many more tight relationships with others and also helped me grow my confidence. Magic also helped me discover other passions, such as quantum mechanics!

Rick Yoon