

Iris Tang

AHSE 1155

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Personal AAA 1

*I have not used generative AI on this assignment.*

### Step 1

Solo Travel:

Flying to New York by myself for the first time. It taught me that I am capable of going out into the world and doing things without relying on my parents forever.

Food Bank:

Going to volunteer at a food bank for the first time. It was a fun and simple way to prove to myself that even as a high schooler I could contribute to society, and I met a diverse group of people and learned about their perspectives in life.

Rejection:

When I got rejected from a college that I had really respected, My parents were very consoling and not at all disappointed in me, which I found slightly surprising given the amount of importance and pressure I had perceived surrounding college decisions. This showed me that my parents will always prioritize me over some name brand school.

Swim Team:

Deciding to join the swim team in my freshman year of high school. At the time I was very shy and afraid to meet new people. By pushing myself out of my comfort zone to become part of a team, it really helped me find new friends and become less socially inept.

Returning to School:

Coming back to school after a prolonged medical leave. It was really touching how my friends, and even people who weren't that close to me, came up and expressed their joy that I was back on campus. It reminded me that I am cared for by my community, even if I don't always realize it.

Step 2

Swim Team:

A couple weeks before the start of freshman year of high school I found myself standing alone next to an outdoor pool. It was my first practice swim team preseason, and I was the first one there. I was full of fears and what-ifs. The pandemic kept me from speaking to anyone face to face outside of my immediate family for over a year, so I was in no way socially savvy. Every time I thought about meeting someone new anxieties entered my mind. Would they be nice?

Would they like me?

I sat there waiting as people slowly trickled in; soon we were corralled

into the pool. The coaches left it up to us to self-assess our swimming levels and choose a lane. Lane one was for those newest to the sport with lane six being reserved for the fastest. I hadn't swum competitively in years, so I found my way to lane three. There, I'd meet Angelina.

I couldn't have known it at the time, but Angelina would end up being one of my closest high school friends. As we spoke, I felt my worries melt away. Angelina, and everyone else on the team, was kinder than I could have imagined. Despite my initial fears, I stayed on the team for the next four years and made so many friends that I would never have met otherwise. Looking back, I'm incredibly glad I decided to breach my comfort zone and join the swim team.

### Step 3

In both the swim team story and my first week at Olin, I was an introvert stepping into a completely new environment. Despite the discomfort that I felt, both experiences involved me forcing myself to become more socially open. During high school I did this by signing up for a new experience, while this past week I have been more proactive about introducing myself and talking to more people. A major part of my identity right now is someone that's scared of social interaction but actively working to combat that fear.

### Step 4

I initially joined this course because I was curious about psychology, and I wanted to know more about how my mind works. I hope it'll make me become more aware of myself and I'll learn why I think some of the thoughts that I think. If I can do that, it'll be easier to filter out the unproductively negative ones, and I can work on overcoming them and becoming someone

more socially capable. I believe that a greater understanding of my own psychology combined with a continued effort to branch out will grant me a lot more success and happiness in the future.