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## **Solitude and Leadership**

What solitude means to me is being alone and keeping yourself grounded in certain situations or circumstances. Leadership is the ability to lead and influence others to follow what you want to do or need to do. Leadership not only allows you to control others, but a leader also shows a positive attitude and is charismatic in the face of adversity. There are many examples of people who have shown these traits of a leader in history. For instance, Martin Luther King Jr. led not only people on a march to the Lincoln Memorial in Washington D.C. on August 28th, 1963 but also delivered his famous speech “I Have A Dream”. This march aimed to bring attention to and change civil and economic rights for the African American people, who were going through segregation and racism from white people. There are many examples of historical figures that have shown leadership, but that is not what I am here to talk about. I am here to talk about my own experience of being a leader and influencing others, especially under pressure.

I remember when I had to step up and influence others to do something that needed to be done. It was a cold night up in the mountains. My family and I were camping at Big Bear for a church retreat with our family and our church. I made new friends from the other churches with us during this retreat. On the last night of the camp, my friends and I decided to stay up all night in the game room and play board games. I think we played about 5 board games that night, which I don't regret at all. After having all of the fun we could, we barely realized it was almost 2 A.M. We knew that we had to stop and go back into our cabins and get sleep, even if we didn't want to. After walking out the door, I noticed in the corner of my eye a bear walking around the room we were in. My friend was about to walk in the same direction as the bear and I had to grab him by his collar to keep him from getting any closer. It was very dark, so we couldn't really see them well, so we had to use our phones for flashlights. What made it difficult for us was not only the bears walking around but that our cabins were far from each other. Gladly, one of my friend's cabins was close by, so we decided to walk him to his cabin first before everybody else. After

walking to the first cabin, I decided to devise a plan of how we would make sure everyone else got into their cabin safely and without any encounters with bears. There were 4 of us left, counting me and my brother, who had to be back at our cabins as soon as possible. I was glad to have seen some light posts that were on, which gave me the idea to walk in the paths where the lights were shown. As we started walking towards our next friend's cabin, I noticed another bear walking around the trees near us. My friend then started freaking out and hyperventilating and couldn't control her breathing. I could feel her shaking and breathing too hard, so I had to hold her and calm her down. At that moment, I just took the matter into my own hands and told them to follow me. We walked up and down the woods in the dark but I knew we were going to make it. As we were walking up closer to our cabins there was a bear right in front of us and saw us. It just stood there staring at us. But I told everyone to walk slowly and eventually we got out of there. After a while, we all made it into our cabins safely.

I think that it is safe to say that a scientific attitude can be shown while showing leadership skills too. For example, a figure in science that can relate is Ignaz Semmelweis and his experiment with childbed fever in 1846. Before, Semmelweis' experiment, the Vienna General Hospital was experiencing deaths from childbed fever in their wards and were wondering how this was happening. Semmelweis decided to put this into an experiment by separating the women into 2 wards. In the first ward, the women were dying of the disease, while the second ward seemed to have fewer deaths than the first ward. The scientist was curious about why this was happening more in the first ward and wanted to make a hypothesis. Semmelweis decided to make this into an experiment where he tested his theory about germs and how they affect patients. Semmelweis knew the risks and sacrifices he had to make in order to perform this experiment. By taking initiative in order to perform such an experiment like this, he was not only able to prove germ theory but also come up with a simple solution that we yet still use today. Semmelweis also knew that during these experiments, people were dying from this disease. It was bad enough that the patients were already dying before the experiment but Semmelweis stepped up in order to solve this issue. He had to conduct these experiments knowing that he was going to lose human lives in order to learn where the disease is actually coming from and how hospitals around the world can save lives and keep patients protected from such diseases. If it weren't for Semmelweis' initiative and leadership in performing the experiment, humans wouldn't even know how to treat our patients in hospitals today. Now, we know that all it took was washing our hands and wearing gloves in order to protect ourselves and the patients. In conclusion, it not only takes risk and courage in order to be a leader, but also to take initiative when no one would.