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## Leadership reflection Essay for INTD100: Coffee and Black Holes

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A leadership role that I have had in the past is being an RA in the dorm at my boarding high school. Within this role, I had jobs that were related to assisting students in my dorm, as well as things that would benefit the boarding community as a whole. Being an RA was important because students were able to talk to me about problems they were facing without having to speak to an adult, which often made students more comfortable. The responsibilities that came with the job included weekly lunch meetings with the RAs from other dorms as well as the boarding life coordinator at my school, weekly meetings with the dorm residents and faculty, being in charge of celebrating peoples birthdays, doing nightly check ins with students and being an orientation leader at the beginning of the school year. My job as an RA allowed me to help people within my community with things that I had experience with such as homesickness, bad roommates, and getting comfortable with living away from home during highschool.

When reading the Solitude and Leadership speech that William Deresiewicz delivered at West Point Academy, I found there were a lot of points he made that I could relate to my time as an RA. Deresiewicz mentions in his speech about how multitasking does not allow you to think clearly about what you're trying to focus on, but does the opposite of not letting you think deeply about one thing before it's time to think about the next. The school I went to required you to be doing an after school sport, as well as requiring about 3-4 hours of homework each night. At the time that I was an RA, I was also taking a piano lesson, doing a yoga class, and doing many hours of homework each night. I found that I had to think about multiple things at once most of the time in order to keep up with the expectations that were placed on me as a student leader. I often would forget about responsibilities as an RA, and on a few different occasions, I had to reschedule meetings with my dorm faculty because of my piano lessons, or because I had a test the next day that I could not spare the time to separate myself from my studies. Within his speech, Deresiewicz says: "true leadership means being able to think for yourself"[1]. He then goes on to mention how no one is taught how to think for oneself, and that multitasking reduces your ability to think for yourself. I experienced this daily with my job as an RA, because there were a lot of times where I was required to think specifically about solutions to issues in the dorm, however I was not able to put in 100 percent effort to this one thing because of the multiple other concerns I had to deal with in my day to day life. These other tasks, like he mentions, caused me to be a worse leader than I had potential for because I was not able to think clearly about the job I had as an RA.