

## **Blocks**

My childhood was spent playing with two different toys, the brain-numbing puzzle known as the Rubik's Cube and the famous building block known as Legos. I was at my cousin's house when I first touched a Rubik's Cube. Twisting and turning it, I asked myself, "What is this thing?" Suddenly, my cousin snatched it away from me and quickly matched up all the colors. I was immediately intrigued. I purchased one and began spending countless hours of my childhood learning how to solve it, but that wasn't enough. I spent time memorizing different algorithms, noting different patterns, and persevering through failed attempts just to solve the Rubik's Cube faster. Additionally, my first Lego set—a Lego fire station—was purchased by my father. From then on I became obsessed, as I bought and built more Lego sets of various genres and styles as well as various creations from my imagination.

These experiences, or rather my time spent playing with these toys, are the most important of the few experiences I had growing up. I had never been involved in sports or Boy Scouts like my peers since I had to take care of my immigrant grandma and have parents that work full-time, but my time with the Rubik's Cube and Legos filled in the gap. These two toys were the initial building blocks of my persona. My time spent playing with toys lead to the development of characteristics and skills that can be seen in my day-to-day life.

Multitasking is a big part of my life as I often must balance an overwhelming number of chores, schoolwork, and other tasks. The Rubik's Cube helped me improve at this. While solving, one must note the patterns on the cube, recall and execute specific algorithms, and look ahead for the next patterns. Similarly, in order to balance my daily tasks, I analyze and plan what needs to be done that day, creating a schedule that allows me to execute all my tasks in a timely manner.

Throughout high school, I was involved in Model United Nations, a club where students are tasked with developing a solution to an issue that a committee is debating. My time spent learning how to solve the Rubik's Cube aided me in finding creative solutions to quickly solve issues within my committee, and work in unison with the delegates by incorporating the ideas of others, like matching up the right colors on the Rubik's Cube. Furthermore, after constructing various things out of Legos, I attempted to see problems from multiple points of view, comparing the problems of each nation like a piece of Lego that needs to be put together to complete the entire set, as every set has different parts that function in different ways. My understanding of this allows a paper to be created that includes the concerns of all the delegates and solves the issue at hand. Through working with various delegates to solve their problems and leading the way to create an effective resolution I also gained valuable leadership skills.

In retrospect, Toys, most notably the Rubik's Cube and Legos, became the building blocks of the person I am today. My time playing with Legos allowed me to become more creative as I was

able to create various cars, aircraft, and structures out of these tiny building blocks. This creativity was also an essential part of the development of problem-solving and quick situational analysis skills. These skills were developed by my time solving and speed solving the Rubik's Cube, learning how to analyze patterns quickly, and finding an algorithm that will solve the cube, which takes time, practice, and perseverance to become successful. My time spent reflecting on this demonstrated the importance of toys, not just as entertainment but also as a catalyst for the development of a young child's character and skills, which will last them their lifetime.