**UMich -  Everyone belongs to many different communities and/or groups defined by (among other things) shared geography, religion, ethnicity, income, cuisine, interest, race, ideology, or intellectual heritage. Choose one of the communities to which you belong, and describe that community and your place within it. (290/300 words)**

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I was excited that middle school classes allowed electronic devices, but students sat on the floor with their phones to text others who were not far away. Across them, I saw two dusty and unused table tennis tables.

I brought two paddles and a ball to school and asked a classmate to try out this sport. We first played only against each other, but our screams of victory and defeat caught the attention of others. I invited more people, and others joined on their own - the same students who had been fixated on their screens. Occasionally, I freaked out when people slammed my paddles loudly onto the tables out of frustration or joy. But it was satisfying to hear sounds of interaction, instead of just keyboard clicks.

Through enjoyment, the component which groups people together, I created a community of physically active people with verbal interactions with one another. I was content to sense the emotions and personal bonds within this environment.

However, one of us left for basketball, hinting he lost interest. This was when I realized that enjoyment is fragile, and someone has to preserve it. Simply playing with the others wasn’t enough. Before others begin to lose interest, I had to incorporate variety in the games we play.

I started practicing during my evenings. Learning spins, chops, and playing with multiple balls was challenging, but I felt satisfied bringing variety to the table. The others found these additions strange, but their facial expressions told me they were engaged with the sport.   
  
Maintaining this community was an exhausting journey, but pursuing it was rewarding knowing I can maintain the goal I had in mind – getting others to interact with each other, in this increasingly digitalized world.

Hi Farrel,

I really enjoy reading how you tried your best to liven up your class atmosphere creatively. It is definitely a good quality that you can highlight further in this essay. Since the admission committee values personal strengths, I do suggest that your effort and passion for your classmates be highlighted further by providing details into the kind of community you’ve created for your class. Is it an official club at school? Is it a ping-pong group for your class? By elaborating more, you can further display your contribution.

Best of luck!

Melinda