Tell a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.

**Maximum length**: 650 words

Amongst an orchestra of instruments, I’d consider myself a violin, not simply because it’s one of the few instruments I play and adore. Unlike other instruments with instant playability, only with the application of the rosin can a violin and its bow sound a melody. Despite this, the value of the violin in a concerto is nowhere diminished. It’s ultimately about how well the violinist is able to handle the stringed instrument and maximize its potential.

I was a child of strong inner values and morals, a stubborn one, yet timid and powerless. Consequently, being heard was out of the question. It felt especially suffocating when I couldn’t stand up for my loved ones. A shattering moment was back in grade school: I stumbled upon a simultaneous noise of my older brother’s muted sob, his palms tightly wrapped around his mouth, and a seemingly abusive reproach of an adult that dominated the commotion. I recalled the countless times the adult yelled and demanded my brother to stop crying, to “man up”. My blood boiled that my heart immediately pushed my body forward, ready to shield the poor boy. Faced with the beast at last, I froze. Everything became a blur as my soul cowered away from my frame. Until this day, I’m still uncertain of whether it was the height of the adult, or if it’s the intimidating demeanor, but I knew it was a part of me that direct speech was beyond my reach. My voice was hardly heard this way. Over the years, I have witnessed similar cases wherein my younger male cousin was rebuked at by his parents for enjoying a *Barbie* film with his sister, and my male friend got mocked for being soft-hearted.

Strong-willed, I did not want this to be the end of the story. There must be another way to fight for justice. An opportunity came when I took the chance to partake in a high school public art exhibition. It was finally time I put my artistic abilities into good use. Hoping to relay the issue surrounding toxic masculinity within, at the very least, my community, I aimed for an artwork to represent my brother and males alike who are victims of the matter. Starting off with a blank canvas before me, I discerned that I should step out of the comfort of creating realistic illustrations, the art-style I’ve spent over a decade impatiently, and finally mastered. I thought that depicting a realistic scene is unfit to represent the diversity in attributes of males worldwide, regardless of age, size, ethnicity, or culture. There was an urgency to convey a grand scheme, and after about an hour of thought, geometric art came into mind.

‘Bloom’ is the name of the piece. I nearly gave up on ‘Bloom’ as I noticed its flaws; its unappealing lines, the nauseous use of vibrant color, its overall mess of a clump. Time was against me, so I must exhibit the work I had before I could draft another plan.

The exhibition presentation occurred in a blink of an eye. A choir of claps filled the room. A mother of a male friend I know came up to me, sharing how inspired she felt. An unanticipated group of peers showered me with words of sincere praise. The art teacher requested to feature ‘Bloom’ in the school’s expo, as well as the school newspaper. It then struck me that it was the contrast in color, the inclusive symbolism of the male species, the elements fused together to put forth powerful emotion, and not the imperfections, that moved the audiences.

At this moment, I am barely specked with the white, sticky powder of rosin. Nevertheless, this is the mere beginning; it has only been one performance. It’s even more inspiring to find out that with age, the tune and resonance of the violin improves. Direct confrontation might not work for me, but that is not the only way out, just as instantly sounding instruments aren’t the only ones out there.

Our families and communities often define us and our individual worlds. Community might refer to your cultural group, extended family, religious group, neighborhood or school, sports team or club, co-workers, etc. Describe the world you come from and how you, as a product of it, might add to the diversity of the UW.

**Maximum length**: 300 words

**Tip**: Keep in mind that the UW strives to create a community of students richly diverse in cultural backgrounds, experiences, values and viewpoints.

I had always cringed whenever my parents reminded me, “Humans are social beings,” until I experienced it myself. I never really had friends I truly connected with prior to high school, and oddly enough, I pride myself on being the lone wolf. I was a slave to independence.

At the start of sophomore year, I was invited by a batchmate to help start and be a part of an art club. Regardless of my internal reluctance, I felt terrible rejecting the offer. Little did I know that the starting club members would be the friends who’d change me. These are the very friends who turned fantasy into reality. “What if we were able to hand down soft-skill knowledge to our juniors?” I joked as I promptly brushed the idea off. Not even a month after, those friends and I found ourselves planning an educational webinar for 5th - 8th graders to attend. Christmas celebrations at school and forming an alliance with school leaders in order to bridge communication gaps between students and teachers were some of the plans my friends and I successfully executed together to make our school a better place, even if only a tad bit.

Through my community of friends, I have fostered an open mind and a passionate spirit. The old me would simply aim for a 4.0 GPA, while the reincarnated person I am wishes to turn ideas into reality. Aiming to pursue bioengineering, I hope to do so by maximizing UW’s resources, from its facilities to their students, exchanging ideas and collaborating to invent a creation that may solve issues relevant today, and possibly, the future.

Part #1 Describe the community: show the depiction of your old vs new self

Part #2 One episode that you want to highlight → close with what you learn

Part #3 What you want to bring to UDub

Hi Ashley,

Well done on your draft! From your writing above, I can see that your group of friends during high school did help you. I can also see how it is affecting you to become more compassionate and caring about others around you.

However, I think the prompt for the supplement essay is asking you to describe your community. Who are they? How do they differ from you? Why did you eventually enjoy becoming a part of them? What about them made you change your mind about connecting with others?

Another part that I think you could elaborate on further is your future contribution to UW based on what you have learned. Which group of people? Any chance to do it both in and out of the classroom settings? Show your understanding of UW by mentioning explicitly you could be contributing to its diversity.

With supplemental essays in general—due to the nature of their limited word count—you will need to be quite direct and concise in answering their questions.

Hope that helps and all the best with your application!

Kind regards,

Johana