**Describe a personal life experience that has had particular significance for you and highlight the reason(s) it was significant, whether it had an impact on others, and any insights or understandings you gained from it. (800 word maximum)**

As I quickly jolt from handrail to handrail with each of the ship's rocky sway while simultaneously receiving an unwanted free hair blower service, I notice a vast island with brilliant blue water, golden sand, towering coconut trees. There was barely any sort of transportation, and little did I know that the truck taking me to the compound would be one of the only vehicles available on the island.

Despite the lengthy flight in an old airplane with unquestionable safety and another skeptical boat ride, I safely arrived, brimming with anticipation of starting my community service in Kei Island, a remote island in Maluku, Indonesia.

A few months prior, I’d hopped on a call with Dr Vanessa, head of Kei Island doctorSHARE, an established non-profit humanitarian organization that focuses on health services compound. “Many locals are experiencing diarrhea, possibly coming from their consumption…” she stated during the program introduction.

This led me to think, “We can’t see or taste contaminants, but if they’re that harmful to our body, shouldn’t there be something we can do about it?”

I jumped at this chance to ask about their water condition. Although she wasn't sure, she claimed that their water contained white residue.

This information piqued my interest. Asking for several litres of water samples to be sent to Jakarta, I tested the water at the Indonesian Government’s water testing facility and discovered that it contained high calcium carbonate levels, which can cause heart rhythm disturbances and kidney stones.

“A water filter would definitely help to reduce the contaminants,” I thought. I consulted with a water specialist to ask for his advice on the water filter’s layers. After that, I got in touch with Dr. Vanessa once more to confirm that all of the materials for the filter's layers were accessible and available on the island.

I spent several weeks prototyping the water filter and testing it out on the water sample. Using a small prototype, the percentage of contaminants did, in fact, decrease by about 17% when the filtered water was retested in the lab. Unquestionably, a larger one would significantly remove more contaminants.

When I reached the island, I explained my findings and the effectiveness of the water filter to the residents of the doctorSHARE compound. Given the short time I had there, I demonstrated how to build a scaled-down model. The residents then approached me, took a look at the materials and asked questions on the purpose of each layer.

At the end of the day, I distributed an instruction manual I had created and printed out for them to build the water filter. I also taught a few boarding school seniors on Kei Island regarding my water filtration system, with the hope that they would share it with others in a Domino Effect around the island. I made a PowerPoint presentation and walked them through an explanation of the necessity of the filter and a step-by-step tutorial for making one. I left the island with certainty that they were able to create the water filter themselves.

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This experience made me appreciate how fortunate I am and that there are tons of communities in need of our helping hand. For the people of Kei Island, their main necessity is having access to clean water. I highlighted how water is essential to life because it makes up 60% of the human body and necessary to fight diseases like diarrhea and hypertension. Additionally, I spoke about how water security is drastically decreasing as it can’t keep up with the rising demand due to population growth, hence why they need to properly utilize their water.

As they grew more conscious of the water they were using, they became motivated to start building their own water filter. When I left, the students were going to propose the water filter implementation at their school assembly, sharing the instruction manual throughout their neighborhood, and the doctorSHARE residents are currently building their own water filter.

My experience and the knowledge I acquired while creating the water filter have further fueled my desire to get more active in addressing issues related to water security and accessibility, whether it be by raising awareness online or by starting a non-profit organization aimed at facilitating the availability of clean water in rural areas.