**Prompt 1 - Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes or contributed to group efforts over time. (350 words)**

When my parents went to China for a couple of months for my mom’s cancer treatment, everything went out of control. The house was messy, my siblings’ grades tanked, and they watched TV until midnight. I couldn’t bear to see the situation. So, I decided to control what I could: my siblings. I’d try to fill in the parent figure and take on the role that would nurture them.

I started by trying to help with the schoolwork that they had trouble with. However, it was easier said than done. My siblings couldn’t focus, no matter how long I tutored them. Hence, I’d get angry and punish them when they weren’t doing well. This resulted in a stressful environment for both my siblings and me.

Remembering how mom does it—l realized that she always smiles. “Maybe that’s what I should do? Doing the opposite of what I’m doing right now?” I said to myself. So, I applied the positive reinforcement approach. I started by learning how to cook so I could prepare their favorite meal when they were focused on studying. I’d also praise them when they finished their schoolwork early and reward them with TV time. Whenever we missed our parents, I would comfort them by playing physical games that were a disguise for cleaning up the house to distract them.

Eventually, things got back on track. The messy house became tidier. Improvements were not only seen in my siblings' grades and well-being but also in mine. Since watching TV was part of their reward, they no longer insisted on watching TV until midnight.

This experience has taught me the importance of patience and encouragement in leadership. Newton’s Third Law of Motion dictates that for every action there’s an equal and opposite reaction. This also applies to leadership. Being forced to do things hurriedly would only backfire. Instead, an encouraging and nurturing environment with patience would yield more positive results as seen in my siblings' progress during our parents’ absence.