**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)**

It was a very messy situation when my parents went to China for a couple months for my mom’s cancer treatment. Since they left, everything went out of control. The house was messy, my siblings’ grades tanked, and they’d watched TV until midnight. I couldn’t bear to see the situation. I needed to fix this somehow. 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 with helping with their schoolworks. I’d teach them the materials that they’re having trouble with, which forced me to review what I’ve learned a few years back. However, it was easier said than done: my siblings weren’t able to focus no matter how long I tutored them. Hence, I’d get angry and give out punishment when they weren’t able to understand, resulting in a stressful environment both for me and my siblings. I felt that nothing positive was yielded.

Trying to remember how mom does it, I realized that she’s always smiling. “Maybe that’s what I should do? Should I do the opposite of what I’m doing right now?” I said to myself. So, I applied the positive reinforcement approach. I started with learning how to cook so I could prepare their favorite meal when they’re able to focus on their study. 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 of cleaning up the house to distract them.

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

These couple of months have 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 in 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 to China.