

“Becoming Me”

When I first thought about starting college, I was filled with excitement. Finally, I would experience freedom, the kind that comes with taking care of myself, making my own decisions, and learning to stand on my own two feet. I imagined myself cooking my own meals, keeping my space clean, managing my time, and having control over my daily life. I was ready. At least, I thought I was.

The first week in Obrero hit me with reality. I often miscalculated my allowance, and honestly, I still do sometimes. It is a small thing, but it reminded me that freedom is not just fun. It comes with responsibility, and I was not always prepared for it. Walking into the COE building on my first day, I couldn't help but notice how... let's just say “older” it felt and looked compared to the other buildings. There was a certain feeling to it, but also a sense that this was a place where I had to grow accustomed to fast.

Adjusting to college life was not just about money or buildings. It was about time, energy, and learning how to push myself. The first semester had 7 a.m. classes, and that schedule was slightly brutal, not as brutal as highschool but having to depend on my alarm was the challenge. I struggled with early mornings and taking care of myself. On top of that, I failed calculus. At first, I felt mixed emotions and feigning indifference, but I truly knew that it shattered my heart, outside still intact but the inside are now bits and pieces. I remember staring at the result, I had a feeling that I was going to fail. I had worked hard, but it was not enough. Failing calculus made me confront my weaknesses. I realized I procrastinate, I sometimes lack discipline, and I can be hard on myself when I fail. But it also showed me that I care about my goals, and that I am capable of learning from failure. I began to see that mistakes are not the end, but an opportunity to reflect and grow. Just like what Socrates said, “The unexamined life is not worth living”. My failure forced me to examine myself deeply.

The second semester brought a small relief. Classes started at 9 a.m., giving me more breathing room, and with it came motivation to focus and improve. I started planning my allowance more carefully and managing my time better. I began to take responsibility for my own life in a way I had not before. This experience reminded me of Plato's idea that the rational part of the soul should govern emotions and desires. By reflecting on my failure and planning my actions, I could let reason guide me rather than frustration, desires, or fear.

Through these experiences, I have begun to understand myself better. I realized that I can be resilient even when I stumble. I discovered patience in managing my own life and a sense of responsibility that I had not fully felt before. I also recognized

weaknesses that need work, such as procrastination and self doubt. These weaknesses are not failures. They are guides showing me where I can grow.

“Know thyself” is no longer just a phrase. It is a daily practice of observing my choices, my mistakes, and my small victories. It means understanding that I am a mix of strengths and flaws, successes and failures, and that my growth depends on being honest with myself. College has been the first real test of that honesty, and even with early mornings, mismanaged allowance, and failed exams, I am learning who I really am.

Looking forward, I want to continue discovering myself. I want to improve where I fall short, embrace my strengths, and live according to my values. Freedom, I have learned, is not just independence. It is responsibility, self reflection, and growth. College has shown me that the journey of self-discovery is not a race. It is a steady path I walk one choice, one failure, and one victory at a time.