**Ravi UC Essay Draft**

**Prompt #5**

***Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to overcome this challenge. How has this challenge affected your academic achievement?***

A challenge could be personal, or something you have faced in your community or school. Why was the challenge significant to you? This is a good opportunity to talk about any obstacles you’ve faced and what you’ve learned from the experience.

Did you have support from someone else or did you handle it alone? If you’re currently working your way through a challenge, what are you doing now, and does that affect different aspects of your life? For example, ask yourself, “How has my life changed at home, at my school, with my friends or with my family?”

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**This is a story of how I earned my safe haven – emotionally in my head.**

**Middle school bell rang and I came out of my classroom to a highly energized sea of students. I had no outstanding records, no credibility to my name other than as the guy who just went with the flow.**

**It was then a fresh new page as I entered high school, or so was the narrative in every average and even slacking middle school graduates determined to up their game. Thankfully, I started my *seaventure* right by throwing myself into a pool of sharks in Debate Club: the inner, competitive beast in me came out, as was reflected by my propelled academics and stronger social circle.**

**Yet just as I thought I was starting to conquer the currents, I sensed a dark void luring in the waters.**

**A flick to my ego would compromise a week’s worth of productivity, stranding me on no man’s land. I had become so dependent on what people think of me that I was doubting myself whenever I’d shed a skin or two.**

**It was this little nook that I started visiting that really embraced my true face: reading. Self-development books really remodeled my thought process when it comes to finding that balance between mental health and physical success. I really like and hold on to this one observation made by Charles Duhigg who said that t**

**And that’s when I returned to my roots; the things I truly care and am passionate about: debate and photography.**

**Same old routine, new mindset. The solution to my personal struggle follows this framework: to internally believe and live it out, materializing the positive outlook I desire and ultimately creating the world I want to inhabit, just like what Duhigg taught me.**

**This might have been the same, cliché storyline as that of a superhero movie, but I can proudly say that I have never been more prepared to collect my gold as I traverse through unchartered waters.**

***Hi Ravi!***

***Thank you for opening up a bit more on your mental health journey, I really appreciate it.***

***The way I look at it, you were on the cocoon stage to becoming the powerful butterfly that you are now. Good job on this piece and all the best for your applications!***

***- Matthew***