***Prompt 1: Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.***

There are two opposite extremes to everything. There are the athletes and the bookworms, the logical and the creative, and the introverts and extroverts. I’ve always wondered which end I would grow up to be. Would I be an athlete since I liked soccer? Or would I be a bookworm since I loved Harry Potter? Would I be logical since I liked maths? Or creative since I enjoyed arts? Who would I be labeled as?

Growing up, the chatty and more outgoing kids were often viewed as confident and smart. On the contrary, the quiet and more introverted were regarded as arrogant/rude. Throughout elementary and middle school, I was that chatty kid. I had a lot of friends and I could talk to just about anyone without any form of discomfort.

As I got into high school, I started drifting away from a lot of my friends and I became less and less of the chatty kid I once was. I was no longer comfortable starting up small conversations with strangers like I once was able to do with ease. One day at school, we were asked to take a Myers-Briggs personality test, which classified me as an INFJ: ​​Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling, and Judging. While I knew what these words meant individually, I had no idea what they meant regarding my personality. So after reading the given description on the testing site, I did a little research on my own. I came across a few articles and it was then that I noticed that the description almost exactly mirrored some aspects of my everyday life. I prefer to interact with a few close friends rather than keeping up with a large group of acquaintances and, after a long day of socializing, I feel emotionally drained and I need to find time for myself to be able to run my intricate inner monologues.

For a while, I was satisfied with being an introvert and perhaps I got too into it. Most people would often connect introversion with shyness, but this is not true. Introversion has more to do with how you recharge and regain your energy. However, I didn’t know this at the time and I just assumed that since I was classified as an introvert, I was supposed to act shy. I would fall into a state of awkwardness in almost every conversation and I would stop hanging out with friends thinking I just wouldn’t enjoy it. Over time, I started feeling more and more lonely and left out. I didn’t want to spend my days all alone at home everyday. However, I didn’t want to hang out with a bunch of people everyday either.

I struggled with finding the right balance for a long time. I didn’t want to be the shy kid who didn’t talk much, but I didn’t want to hang out with large groups of people either. I felt like I didn’t necessarily fit in as an extrovert, or an introvert; I just fell somewhere in between. With time, I realized that it was NOT a bad thing. I was misguided by the thought of forcing myself into just one label. As a matter of fact, I actually believe that just like oreo stuffing and burger patties, some of the best things fall in between.

So, even though I did not fit into any of the given labels, just like everything else in this world, nothing is black and white. And there’s nothing wrong with being in the grey. So I chose to make my own label where I can take the best parts of being both an introvert and an extrovert and refine those qualities to define myself and where I can just be ME. I’ve found my balance and although I have yet to perfect it, I look forward to university, where I can meet more diversified people and hopefully get closer to this perfect balance.