**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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**“The way we habitually think of our surroundings and ourselves create the worlds that each of us inhabit.” ~ Charles Duhigg**

**This is a story of how I found my safe haven**

**In middle school, I was THAT guy who goes with the flow. I had no outstanding records. No credibility to my name.**

**Entering high school, determined to change, I immersed myself in Debate Club: broadening my achievements and social circle. I also felt accomplished with my high grades.**

**But I knew something was coming.**

**My development have never made me felt so alive before. Ironically, this is also when I became a worrywart. What if all this was just temporary? Was it just luck? These questions made me very ANXIOUS about going back to my old self.**

**A flick to my ego would compromise a week’s worth of productivity, which had me stranded on no man’s land. I’d become so dependent on what people think of me that I would lose the ability to appreciate my development, and constantly compare myself with others.**

**As I self-reflect, I realized that I didn’t know how to understand myself. This came to me when I picked up a new hobby: reading. Self-development books really remodeled my thoughts revealing that emotional-success is purely determined by how I understand my thoughts and interests.**

**Therefore, I went back to the things I love: debate and photography.**

**Over time, reaching for emotional safe haven was my goal. Step by step, I was able to slowly but surely purged out the insecurities in me and learned “How to Think Big,” which materialized into a better balance between my anxieties and responsibilities.**

**Nothing is new. The solution to my personal struggle is simple: Believe and Act, which embodies the strength to positively change how I view my surroundings, control the life I desire, and create the world I want to inhabit – just like what Duhigg taught me.**

**This ordinary yet priceless personal lesson has given me a glimpse of what I can become: someone with endless possibilities. Now, I’m hungrier than ever to take on new challenges.**