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My thoughts on the content will be reflected in footnotes at the bottom of each respective page. With the exceptions of annotations, page numbers, changes in font (for readability), name replacements or identifiers (protecting and indicating participants in discussion-based content), the original content is unedited.

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Date of commentary: 2/26/17

Date of original content (Approximate): March, 2013.

Format: Event application / E-mail

Subject (Approximate): Application, acceptance, judgment, assent, profession.

Participants: 1-5.

Part (if Applicable): 1 of 3.

Synopsis: In early 2013, I was provided an opportunity to apply for a Higher Education Residence Life 3-day event named "STARS College." The event was considered very prestigious. The application consisted of three questions to determine attendee motivation, experience, and personality. My responses were drawn from personal experience in implementing Stoic philosophy in my work as a Resident Assistant.

### ~ Start of Original Content ~

**First Question of Application: *Why are you considering a career in housing/residence life profession? Please address how current or past roles within housing/residence life have impacted this consideration.***

The early part of my college career has been dedicated to developing my mission in life. This mission took the form of a lifelong objective to improve the quality of life of as many people as I am able. I continually sought experiences that would allow me to further define and refine this mission. I applied to be a Resident Assistant to facilitate that goal with greater responsibility and capabilities.<sup>1</sup>

I began my career in Residence Life half-way through the academic year as a substitute for a graduating Resident Assistant. Resident Assistant training was the most difficult during this part of the year. It was necessary to acclimate quickly and efficiently to rapidly changing conditions, responsibilities, and social spheres. I was considered by staff to be very capable for my ability to remain calm and collected under stressful or exhausting circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

A week passed after my completion of training. I prepared to meet with my floor of residents for the first time. In the first floor meeting, after explaining basic expectations of floor etiquette and

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<sup>1</sup> This paragraph refers to my initial year of practice as a Stoic. I searched for opportunities to test and improve my skills in applying Stoic philosophy. The Resident Assistant position provided the means and methods to accomplish this – students depended on me for help and guidance, and my personal conduct was under constant observation.

<sup>2</sup> The difficulty of this period was valuable experience as a practicing Stoic. It forced me to adapt quickly and efficiently to changing conditions. In so doing, my skills in "expecting/wishing to happen only what happens" were repeatedly tested and strengthened. The quotes "If it is not right, do not do it. If it is not true, do not say it," (from Marcus Aurelius) and "This is an impression, and not what it appears to be," (paraphrasing Epictetus) were kept fresh in my mind throughout – a habit that continued on.

procedures, I described my motivations behind pursuing the Resident Assistant position. An environment of mutual respect and solidarity was established on my floor.<sup>3</sup>

I was selected in the following semester to be a staff member of a newly constructed Residence Hall. The transition of residents from their temporary living space to the new Residence Hall took place midway through the semester. The process was difficult but successful. It was during this period and the semesters to follow that I came to be known as a peaceful mediator or “adhesive” that can bring and hold a staff together.<sup>4</sup>

I ardently pursue a career in Residence Life in the belief I can build upon these achievements. My skill-set has proven useful in supporting and inspiring residents and staff. Residence Life provided me the opportunities to grow into the person I am. I wish to support it for as long as I am able, however I am able.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In my first meeting with residents, I stated that I would cover basic rules and policy updates first, reserving what they could expect from me for last. I explained at the end of the meeting that I was training myself to learn the difference between right and wrong, and do the right thing regardless of how I might be affected; that I was not in the position for the room and food, to make my resume look better, or for the authority. I continued, stating that I would not lie to them, lord myself over them, turn my back on them, or expect them to do anything I would not be willing to do myself. I asked them to hold me accountable to this – that they will learn whether or not I’m telling the truth through my actions. The message seemed to resonate with the residents, and a respect-based community formed over the semester.

<sup>4</sup> The transfer of 350 students between was mandated to be complete in a 12 hour window. It was a valuable opportunity to test patience, compassion, and endurance.

<sup>5</sup> The Resident Assistant position was an ideal vehicle for testing Stoic philosophy in a variety of environments under many conditions for extended periods. In truth, all careers possess the resources to accomplish this in various ways. A career in Residence Life appeared to me to be the most immediate and clear stepping stone in gathering more means and methods to continue life-long development as a Stoic.