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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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Participants: 1-5

Part (if Applicable): 2 of 3

Synopsis: The content is the second of a three-part series detailing my accepted application to a 3-day Higher Education Residence Life event, "STARS College," in 2013. The second application question concerns my interpretation of the effect my roles have had on me. Although I do not explicitly mention it, I affirm that my positions were vehicles for practicing Stoicism, and improving my skills in applying it.

~ Start of Original Content ~

Second application question: *How have you grown up as a person because of the positions you hold? What challenges have you overcome? What successes have you achieved?*

Through the Resident Assistant position, I have learned to take no good or bad experience for granted. I have cultivated an ability to convert negative experiences into positive ones by choosing to view them as opportunities to learn. I have become more attuned to the potential bond that can form between Resident Assistants and residents, based upon mutual respect and understanding. The situations and responsibilities that I have encountered as a Resident Assistant has allowed me to test and improve my personal character on a daily basis.¹

Beginning my Resident Assistant position half-way through a year, and transitioning between buildings into a new staff less than a year afterward, have been two great challenges. The frequency with which I have been placed in new staffs and floors has presented unique personal challenges. I resolve myself to do the best that I can for residents and staff, which has continuously lead to the formation of strong relationships between them and I. The circumstances that lead to separations of these relationships are

¹ Each of these sentences alludes to my morning-to-night thought pattern while carrying out my Resident Assistant duties. My use of the terms "good" or "bad" while discussing my experiences was done for understandability – I did not ultimately believe that my experiences were good or bad in themselves, because they were externally-brought; they could not have been good or bad, even if they initially appeared so, because of the Stoic premise that Virtue alone is good, and Vice alone is evil.

Practicing Stoics aim to expand their interpretation of who may be considered friends or family beyond what is conventional – even to those harboring hostile intent, or have attempted to cause direct or indirect harm to the Stoic. The reasoning behind this stance is that all persons possess Reason, which creates a common link independent of age, gender, place of birth, and background, and enables humans to recognize this as so. Intentionally deviating from this link, e.g. wishing harm on someone or intending to exploit them, severs this commonality. A community of individuals acting for the mutual benefit of one another is resilient and adaptive – something I kept very close in mind through my undergraduate education.

not easy to experience, though I understand and come to terms with the result. I believe that allowing these challenges to pass without examining their deeper parts is a mistake, and I utilize the difficulty as means to build courage, patience, endurance, and compassion.²

I have succeeded in taking advantage of the nature of the Resident Assistant position to accelerate my personal growth. I believe it to be a success that Residence Life staff at my University understands that I am reliable, and that my motivations are pure. I have forged consistently meaningful and mutually respectful relationships with my residents, reflected in their willingness to confide in me and respond to requests I make of them. Residence Directors at my University speak highly of me, entrust in my abilities, and regard me as an asset. I deeply consider the implications of these successes, and I use them to fuel my daily and future endeavors.³

~ End of Original Content ~

² Each year as a Resident Assistant, I was transferred to a different Residence Life staff and building. This provided valuable experience in quickly applying Stoic principles to consistently changing conditions. Although I often preferred to remain with staff and residents with whom I've established relationships, I understood my supervisors motivations – I was held to have a stabilizing and uniting effect on the staffs in which I worked. Conventionally, it meant that my work would prove to be more difficult than if I opposed the transfers. As a practicing Stoic, accepting the transfers meant strengthening my grasp of leadership means and methods.

³ While not goods, conventional successes are preferable, and serve as measures of effectiveness of the methods that contributed to bringing them about. I restricted my view of what may be considered true success to whether I consistently, deliberately attempted to carry out virtuous actions throughout my given pursuits. In this way, I considered conventional failures to be successes in the end – provided I were certain that my intentions were appropriately formed, maintained, and carried out throughout the endeavors.