

## Reflective Essay on Goals and Relationships

### A. Goals

Today: (as of 7:37PM, 3/27/17) I hope to finish my homework before midnight and do about an hour of SAT practice to prepare for the April 5 exam. I also need to shower and brush my teeth soon to prepare for bed.

1 week from today: I hope to have finished the practice problems from the SAT review book, and to have finished all of the homework due by next Monday (a week from today) so I don't have to sleep too late on the weekends. I also aim to have bowled well in Saturday's league so I'm better-prepared for the tournament in April. In my free time (but I don't know how much there would be), any juggling of piano practice, Rubik's cubing, and extra math practice is desirable.

1 month from today: I hope to feel accomplished about the SAT taken in school and be prepared for the programming challenge (a month and two days from today), the bowling tournament (a month and three days from today), and the AP tests I have (beginning a month and four days from today). This means a lot of steady, hard practice in all three of these fields/exercises. I also aim to improve my sleep habits, going to sleep before midnight about half of the time on weekdays and every day on the weekends. I also hope to have continued practicing from my driver's test, which is a month later.

1 year from today: Hopefully, much more has happened in the last year. SAT subject tests, more SAT tests to try and improve my score, passing the driver's test, applying to colleges, and hopefully getting accepted into some of the colleges I apply to, if not all. After college admissions and entering four or five more AP classes, I hope that my intellectual wellness will improve, with my intelligence growing and my mind more at ease now that I've become more used to the idea of AP classes and have already completed college applications. I also want to have improved my sense of occupational wellness by working over the summer for some time at my aunt's bakery in NYC, so I can get some real on-the-job experience (and spend some time with family I rarely see!).

And then, hopefully, I'll aim Rubik's cubing and bowling champion. But only if I have enough spare time :-).

10 years from today: It's much more fuzzy where I'll be after college, but I aim to go to postgraduate studies and achieve a PhD. in the computer sciences or mathematics. I don't know what institute this will be at, and it doesn't really matter— as long as they have the resources and the teachers with the necessary know-how, I'm in. I aim to improve my social wellness— not necessarily with a romantic partner, but I'll never know— by creating a solid friend group out of later-high-school friends, college friends, and any people I meet along the way, a support group that I can rely on for the rest of my life. And hopefully I'll meet some business partners and find a job, using that occupational wellness I gain from 2017's summer experiences with my aunt as my first job experience on my résumé. Lastly, I hope to gain spiritual wellness after I leave school. School has been the institution to guide my life for as long as I can remember (ever since I was very young), and moving away from it and out into the "real world" will be a great shock for me, as I'm sure it is for everyone else. I hope I don't get distracted from the greater picture in life— I hope to discover what matters to me and work towards it, to re-prioritize from school to whatever that may be.

## B. Relationships

Grandma (maternal): My grandma was the greatest influence on my youth, and our visits to her where she lives now in NYC are the most dear moments in my life. Almost all of who I fundamentally am, excluding the recent changes from high-school stimuli, come from her and her early care for me and my siblings. Even my parents have had much less of an impact on me, them working for most of my early childhood while my grandmother stayed home. Also, while I grew up often on bad terms with my parents, who scold me and try to correct me when I make mistakes, she was always the understanding and rational one. Sam Levenson quipped that “the reason grandparents and grandchildren get along so well is that they have a common enemy” — and while this may only seem a joke and a funny generalization to many, it feels so true to me. I’m sure my parents have tried their best to do their part, not to always be my friend but fill the role of a responsible parent, but it often seems that they are not on my side. My grandmother, even when she used to yell at me, always felt on my side, supporting me and understanding my motives.

Unfortunately, she moved away to help raise my younger cousins when I was only six years-old, so I don’t have many clear memories of her. She always played with us (even once trying to learn to bike alongside us), withstood our crying, and fed us in the absence of our parents. While my goals back then were not clear, she helped mold as I grew up under her responsible lead.

Jessica Lam: My older sister. Like my parents at times, bossing me around. Sometimes even meaner, believing that she has authoritarian authority over me and my younger sister. But the age gap between her and me is much smaller than the gap between my parents and me, and it is much easier to relate to her worries, goals, and frustrations and vice versa than it is to communicate with our parents.

Jessica was always the model child. She is more obedient, hardworking, and confident than my younger sister or I. She had to brave the same challenges a year before I did, with little preparation from my parents, creating a year-long buffer zone of awareness before I dove into those same challenges. So of the three of us children, she definitely had it the hardest, not knowing what came next. And while she whines about it and is often uber-worried about the things to come because she is unaware of what comes next, this makes her an excellent role-model as a leader.

So when I need consoling, she can comfort me because she’s already gone through those challenges, recently enough that the challenges and the outcomes are still fresh in her mind. She can help with homework, can participate in the same clubs as me, and even acts as a temporary chauffeur for me sometimes with my inability to legally drive myself. She knows better than me what decisions will benefit me and which ones delude me, because she has already faced them herself. So she is my seer, an advisor more true and honest than anyone (except perhaps my wise grandma).