

# College Essay Guy

WORKSHOP

Student Workbook



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## Brainstorming Exercises

### Exercise #1: I Love + I Know

In one minute, make a list of random things you love. Examples: I love ... the ocean. I love ... the way clean laundry smells. I love ... winning an argument. After you've done that, spend one minute making a list of things you know a lot about. (Examples: I know a lot about ... board games ... World War II history ... constructed languages, etc.)

### Exercise #2: If You Really Knew Me...

Write in the box below what people would know about you if they *really* knew you:



### Exercise #3: Essence Objects

Spend at least five minutes naming "essence objects." These are tangible things that represent memories, moments, relationships, or values that are important to you.

Here are 20 guiding questions to help you brainstorm (you can write your answers next to the questions if you'd like).

- What's an object that reminds you of home?
- What object makes you feel safe?
- What's a food that reminds you of your family?
- What object represents a challenge you've faced?
- What's a dream or goal you have for the future?
- What's something about you that sometimes surprises people?
- Who are you with and what are you doing when you feel most like yourself?
- What brings you joy?
- What's hanging on your bedroom walls?
- What are you proud of?
- What's an object that reminds you of something that still feels unresolved in your life?
- What's an object that represents something you know now that you didn't know five years ago?
- What action or gesture represents love to you?
- What do you like to do that does not involve technology?
- What will you save for your child someday?
- What's the most memorable meal you've ever eaten or made?
- What's in your bag right now? Anything that's always there?
- What do you like to collect?
- What have you kept from a trip?
- What's something that people associate with you?

## Exercise #4: The Values Exercise

**Instructions:** Highlight and **bold** the 10 values you connect with most from the list below. Of those 10, **underline** your top 5. Finally, ***italicize*** your top 3.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> personal development<br><input type="checkbox"/> recognition<br><input type="checkbox"/> accountability<br><input type="checkbox"/> inspiration<br><input type="checkbox"/> music<br><input type="checkbox"/> helping others<br><input type="checkbox"/> peace<br><input type="checkbox"/> diversity<br><input type="checkbox"/> expertise<br><input type="checkbox"/> vulnerability<br><input type="checkbox"/> global awareness<br><input type="checkbox"/> hunger<br><input type="checkbox"/> my country<br><input type="checkbox"/> sleep<br><input type="checkbox"/> productivity<br><input type="checkbox"/> intuition<br><input type="checkbox"/> culture<br><input type="checkbox"/> healthy boundaries<br><input type="checkbox"/> second chances<br><input type="checkbox"/> listening<br><input type="checkbox"/> family<br><input type="checkbox"/> excitement<br><input type="checkbox"/> travel<br><input type="checkbox"/> adventure<br><input type="checkbox"/> laughter<br><input type="checkbox"/> entrepreneurship<br><input type="checkbox"/> wonder<br><input type="checkbox"/> health and fitness<br><input type="checkbox"/> love<br><input type="checkbox"/> close relationships<br><input type="checkbox"/> humility<br><input type="checkbox"/> art<br><input type="checkbox"/> responsibility<br><input type="checkbox"/> wealth<br><input type="checkbox"/> _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> safety<br><input type="checkbox"/> creativity<br><input type="checkbox"/> knowledge<br><input type="checkbox"/> inclusion<br><input type="checkbox"/> curiosity<br><input type="checkbox"/> gratitude<br><input type="checkbox"/> faith<br><input type="checkbox"/> communication<br><input type="checkbox"/> interdependence<br><input type="checkbox"/> efficiency<br><input type="checkbox"/> stability<br><input type="checkbox"/> humor<br><input type="checkbox"/> truth<br><input type="checkbox"/> order<br><input type="checkbox"/> excellence<br><input type="checkbox"/> religion<br><input type="checkbox"/> beauty<br><input type="checkbox"/> meaningful work<br><input type="checkbox"/> trust<br><input type="checkbox"/> self-expression<br><input type="checkbox"/> fun<br><input type="checkbox"/> rationality<br><input type="checkbox"/> democracy<br><input type="checkbox"/> self-control<br><input type="checkbox"/> balance<br><input type="checkbox"/> adaptability<br><input type="checkbox"/> success<br><input type="checkbox"/> independence<br><input type="checkbox"/> variety<br><input type="checkbox"/> community<br><input type="checkbox"/> patience<br><input type="checkbox"/> challenges<br><input type="checkbox"/> autonomy<br><input type="checkbox"/> loyalty<br><input type="checkbox"/> _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> courage<br><input type="checkbox"/> self-love<br><input type="checkbox"/> ritual<br><input type="checkbox"/> purpose<br><input type="checkbox"/> privacy<br><input type="checkbox"/> freedom<br><input type="checkbox"/> quiet<br><input type="checkbox"/> compassion<br><input type="checkbox"/> cooperation<br><input type="checkbox"/> growth<br><input type="checkbox"/> authenticity<br><input type="checkbox"/> practicality<br><input type="checkbox"/> nature<br><input type="checkbox"/> objectivity<br><input type="checkbox"/> leadership<br><input type="checkbox"/> wisdom<br><input type="checkbox"/> respect<br><input type="checkbox"/> strength<br><input type="checkbox"/> flexibility<br><input type="checkbox"/> financial stability<br><input type="checkbox"/> empathy<br><input type="checkbox"/> belonging<br><input type="checkbox"/> equity<br><input type="checkbox"/> resourcefulness<br><input type="checkbox"/> decisiveness<br><input type="checkbox"/> competence<br><input type="checkbox"/> collaboration<br><input type="checkbox"/> spirituality<br><input type="checkbox"/> social change<br><input type="checkbox"/> honesty<br><input type="checkbox"/> mindfulness<br><input type="checkbox"/> grace<br><input type="checkbox"/> _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
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# Narrative Essay Example

## What Had to Be Done Essay

At six years old, I stood locked away in the restroom. I held tightly to a tube of toothpaste because I'd been sent to brush my teeth to distract me from the commotion. Regardless, I knew what was happening: my dad was being put under arrest for domestic abuse. He'd hurt my mom physically and mentally, and my brother Jose and I had shared the mental strain. It's what had to be done.

Living without a father meant money was tight, mom worked two jobs, and my brother and I took care of each other when she worked. For a brief period of time the quality of our lives slowly started to improve as our soon-to-be step-dad became an integral part of our family. He paid attention to the needs of my mom, my brother, and me. But our prosperity was short-lived as my step dad's chronic alcoholism became more and more recurrent. When I was eight, my younger brother Fernando's birth complicated things even further. As my step-dad slipped away, my mom continued working, and Fernando's care was left to Jose and me. I cooked, Jose cleaned, I dressed Fernando, Jose put him to bed. We did what we had to do.

As undocumented immigrants and with little to no family around us, we had to rely on each other. Fearing that any disclosure of our status would risk deportation, we kept to ourselves when dealing with any financial and medical issues. I avoided going on certain school trips, and at times I was discouraged to even meet new people. I felt isolated and at times disillusioned; my grades started to slip.

Over time, however, I grew determined to improve the quality of life for my family and myself.

Without a father figure to teach me the things a father could, I became my own teacher. I learned how to fix a bike, how to swim, and even how to talk to girls. I became resourceful, fixing shoes with strips of duct tape, and I even found a job to help pay bills. I became as independent as I could to lessen the time and money mom had to spend raising me.

I also worked to apply myself constructively in other ways. I worked hard and took my grades from Bs and Cs to consecutive straight A's. I shattered my school's 100M breaststroke record, and learned how to play the clarinet, saxophone, and the oboe. Plus, I not only became the first student in my school to pass the AP Physics 1 exam, I'm currently pioneering my school's first AP Physics 2 course ever.

These changes inspired me to help others. I became president of the California Scholarship Federation, providing students with information to prepare them for college, while creating opportunities for my peers to play a bigger part in our community. I began tutoring kids, teens, and adults on a variety of subjects ranging from basic English to home improvement and even Calculus. As the captain of the water polo and swim team I've led practices crafted to individually push my comrades to their limits, and I've counseled friends through circumstances similar to mine. I've done tons, and I can finally say I'm proud of that.

But I'm excited to say that there's so much I have yet to do. I haven't danced the tango, solved a Rubix Cube, explored how perpetual motion might fuel space exploration, or seen the World Trade Center. And I have yet to see the person that Fernando will become.

I'll do as much as I can from now on. Not because I have to. Because I choose to.

(606 words)

### What Had to Be Done Essay Analysis

Here's a behind-the-scenes look at how Adrian wrote this essay so you can figure out how to write yours:

First, the author brainstormed the content of his personal statement using the Feelings and Needs Exercise.

Did you spot the elements of that exercise? If not, here they are:

- **Challenges:** Domestic abuse, alcoholic stepdad, little brother Fernando's birth, family's undocumented status
- **Effects:** Author and his brother shared the mental strain. Father was arrested. Funds were tight. Mom worked two jobs. Brothers took care of one another. They kept to themselves when dealing with financial and medical issues. They avoided going on certain school trips. At times the author was discouraged from meeting new people. Grades started to slip.
- **Feelings:** Confused yet Understanding, Anxious, Worried, Relieved, Alone, Lost, Vulnerable, Lonely, Disconnected, Heartbroken, Ashamed, disillusioned. (Note that while not all of these feelings are explicitly stated in the essay, the author named them in his Feelings and Needs Exercise. Having said this, there are a couple places where he did explicitly name his feelings, like in the sentence, "I felt isolated and at times disillusioned." Either way can work.)
- **Needs:** Order, Autonomy, Reassurance, Growth, Safety, Understanding, Empathy, Hope, Support, Self-Acceptance (Again, while not all of these are explicitly stated in the essay, the author named them in his Feelings and Needs Exercise.)
- **What He Did About It:** He took care of his youngest brother; became his own teacher; learned how to fix a bike, swim, socialize; found a job to help pay bills; improved his grades; broke a school swimming record; learned to play instruments; became the first student in his school to pass the AP Physics 1 exam; took a leadership role in clubs; and tutored and counseled friends and peers
- **What He Learned:** He's proud of what he's done, but wants to do more: dance the tango, solve a Rubix Cube, explore perpetual motion, see the World Trade Center, see his little brother grow up ... and do you notice the value here? Hunger. That was his number one value, by the way. And he ends by saying he'll do these things not because he has to, but because he chooses to. This sounds like autonomy. Another one of his top values.

## Feelings and Needs Exercise

| Challenges              | Effects                                                                                                                     | Feelings                                                                             | Needs                                                                              | What I Did                                                                       | What I Learned                                                         |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name one challenge here | The purpose of this section is to differentiate your experiences from those who went through the same challenges you faced. | This is also where the uncommon connections are made<br><br>(see chart on next page) | What was it you were longing for during this time?<br><br>(see chart on next page) | What actions did you take to change or improve your situation and/or for others? | What lessons did you learn or values did you develop during this time? |
|                         |                                                                                                                             |                                                                                      |                                                                                    |                                                                                  |                                                                        |
|                         |                                                                                                                             |                                                                                      |                                                                                    |                                                                                  |                                                                        |



## FEELINGS

### Delighted

Joyful  
Happy  
Amused  
Adventurous  
Blissful  
Elated

### Thankful

Appreciative  
Moved  
Touched  
Tender  
Expansive  
Grateful

### Excited

Enthusiastic  
Overjoyed  
Fervent  
Giddy  
Eager  
Ecstatic  
Thrilled

### Satisfied

Fulfilled  
Gratified

### Interested

Curious  
Absorbed

### Healthy

Empowered  
Alive  
Robust

### Relaxed

Relieved  
Rested  
Mellow  
At ease  
Light

### Content

Cheerful  
Glad  
Comfortable  
Pleased

### Friendly

Affectionate  
Loving  
Passionate

### Energetic

Exhilarated  
Exuberant  
Vigorous

### Alert

Focused  
Awake  
Clearheaded

### Peaceful

Tranquil  
Serene  
Calm

### Confident

Secure  
Safe  
Hopeful

### Scared

Apprehensive  
Dread  
Worried  
Panicky  
Frightened  
Vulnerable

### Nervous

Jittery  
Anxious  
Restless  
Vulnerable

### Tense

Cranky  
Stiff  
Stressed  
Overwhelmed  
Agitated  
Aggravated

### Hurt

Pain  
Agony  
Anguish  
Heartbroken  
Lonely

### \*Depressed

Disconnected  
Detached  
Despondent  
Dejected  
Bored

### Tired

Burnt Out  
Exhausted  
Lethargic

### \*Angry

\*Furious  
\*Rage  
\*Irate  
\*Resentful  
Irritated

### Frustrated

Disappointed  
Discouraged  
Disheartened  
Impatient

### Shocked

Disturbed  
Stunned  
Alarmed  
Appalled  
Concerned  
Horrified

### Sad

Grief  
Despair  
Gloomy  
Sullen  
Downhearted  
Hopeless

### Torn

Ambivalent  
Confused  
Puzzled

### Jealous

Envious  
\*Bitter

### Embarrassed

\*Ashamed  
Contrite  
\*Guilty

## NEEDS

### Intimacy

Empathy  
Connection  
Affection  
Warmth  
Love  
Understanding  
Acceptance  
Caring  
Bonding  
Compassion  
Communion  
Divine Union  
Sexuality

### Autonomy

Choice  
Freedom  
Spontaneity  
Independence  
Respect  
Honor

### Security

Predictability  
Consistency  
Stability  
Trust  
Reassurance

### Partnership

Mutuality  
Friendship  
Companionship  
Support  
Collaboration  
Belonging  
Community  
Consideration  
Seen/heard  
Appreciation

### Purpose

Competence  
Contribution  
Efficiency  
Growth  
Learning  
Challenge  
Discovery

### Order

Structure  
Clarity  
Focus  
Information

### Celebration

Mourning  
Aliveness  
Humor  
Beauty  
Play  
Creativity  
Joy

### Honesty

Integrity  
Authenticity  
Wholeness  
Fairness

### Peace

Groundedness  
Hope

\* These are alarm feelings letting you know that judgments and "shoulds" are in your thoughts and you are disconnected from needs.



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# Montage Essay Example

## The Laptop Essay

My laptop is like a passport. It is plastered with stickers all over the outside, inside, and bottom. Each sticker is a stamp, representing a place I've been, a passion I've pursued, or community I've belonged to. These stickers make for an untraditional first impression at a meeting or presentation, but it's one I'm proud of. Let me take you on a quick tour:

"We <3 Design," bottom left corner. Art has been a constant for me for as long as I can remember. Today my primary engagement with art is through design. I've spent entire weekends designing websites and social media graphics for my companies. Design means more to me than just branding and marketing; it gives me the opportunity to experiment with texture, perspective, and contrast, helping me refine my professional style.

"Common Threads," bottom right corner. A rectangular black and red sticker displaying the theme of the 2017 TEDxYouth@Austin event. For years I've been interested in the street artists and musicians in downtown Austin who are so unapologetically themselves. As a result, I've become more open-minded and appreciative of unconventional lifestyles. TED gives me the opportunity to help other youth understand new perspectives, by exposing them to the diversity of Austin where culture is created, not just consumed.

Poop emoji, middle right. My 13-year-old brother often sends his messages with the poop emoji 'echo effect,' so whenever I open a new message from him, hundreds of poops elegantly cascade across my screen. He brings out my goofy side, but also helps me think rationally when I am overwhelmed. We don't have the typical "I hate you, don't talk to me" siblinghood (although occasionally it would be nice to get away from him); we're each other's best friends. Or at least he's mine.

"Lol ur not Harry Styles," upper left corner. Bought in seventh grade and transferred from my old laptop, this sticker is torn but persevering with layers of tape. Despite conveying my fangirl-y infatuation with Harry Styles' boyband, One Direction, for me Styles embodies an artist-activist who uses his privilege for the betterment of society. As a \$42K donor to the Time's Up Legal Defense Fund, a hair donor to the Little Princess Trust, and promoter of LGBTQ+ equality, he has motivated me to be a more public activist instead of internalizing my beliefs.

"Catapult," middle right. This is the logo of a startup incubator where I launched my first company, Threading Twine. I learned that business can provide others access to fundamental human needs, such as economic empowerment of minorities and education. In my career, I hope to be a corporate advocate for the empowerment of women, creating large-scale impact and deconstructing institutional boundaries that obstruct women from working in high-level positions. Working as a women's rights activist will allow me to engage in creating lasting movements for equality, rather than contributing to a cycle that elevates the stances of wealthy individuals.

"Thank God it's Monday," sneakily nestled in the upper right corner. Although I attempt to love all my stickers equally (haha), this is one of my favorites. I always want my association with work to be positive.

And there are many others, including the horizontal, yellow stripes of the Human Rights Campaign; "The Team," a sticker from the Model G20 Economics Summit where I collaborated with youth from around the globe; and stickers from "Kode with Klossy," a community of girls working to promote women's involvement in underrepresented fields.

When my computer dies (hopefully not for another few years), it will be like my passport expiring. It'll be difficult leaving these moments and memories behind, but I probably won't want these stickers in my 20s anyways (except Harry Styles, that's never leaving). My next set of stickers will reveal my next set of aspirations. They hold the key to future paths I will navigate, knowledge I will gain, and connections I will make. (650 words)

## SEVEN WAYS TO FIND YOUR MONTAGE ESSAY TOPIC

You may notice that these methods connect back to the brainstorming. We started with the “I Love” and “I Know” exercise, for example, which is directly connected to what CEG calls ...

### 1. The I Love/I Know Method

How it works: Pick something you love or have spent a lot of time thinking about and show how this thing connects to many different parts of you. It could be a subject you’ve explored extensively, something you love to do or think about, or some obscure TV show that no one else your age has even heard of.



Examples from past students include cooking, meditation, mazes, plants, history, science, knitting, or even pranks.

Why this is a good method: You get to flex on something you know a lot about. And the weirder the topic, the better!

### 2. The Essence Object(s) or “Stuff in My Room” Method

How it works: Choose an object or several objects and say why it’s (or they’re) meaningful to you and reveal different parts of who you are.

Examples from past students include describing:

Different objects in your room (e.g., a photograph, a souvenir, a whiteboard)

Objects with something in common (e.g., several different books on your bookshelf or the Polaroid photos on your bedroom wall)

An abstract thing (e.g., the things you wonder about while falling asleep or the songs you’ve written)

A single object (e.g., excerpts from a journal you’ve kept or a gift you received)

... and use each one to describe a different side of you.

Why this is a good method: Meaningful objects can correlate to so many different memories, emotions, and values. Plus, the “stuff in my room” essay can be relatively easy to write.



### 3. The Skill or Superpower Method

How it works: Pick a skill and show how it connects to many different parts of your life.

Common examples from past students include problem-solving, recognizing patterns, songwriting, and teaching. More uncommon examples include translating, beatboxing, and seeing how the



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pieces of incredibly complicated systems come together to work in a simple way.

Why this is a good method: Here's our chance to see you in action doing something you're awesome at. Plus, by connecting this ability to a wide range of values, you make this about much more than just this one skill.

#### 4. The Career Method

How it works: Pick a career and build a montage around qualities you already have that will serve you in it.

Examples from past students range from art history to computer science to geriatric medicine.

Why this is a good method: It's relatively easy to write. Plus, along the way, you'll demonstrate some great qualities you'll bring with you to any college campus (even if your career path changes).



#### 5. The Identity Method

How it works: Choose a particular identity or several identities, then describe why it (or they) reveal different sides of you.

Some students focus on one identity, whether that's introversion, for example, or coming out as LGBTQ+, or having a natural "mom vibe." Other students have chosen to describe various identities, whether it's the many roles they play (sibling, researcher, team captain) or the identities they've named in their social media profile: "angry brown girl, feminist, singer, meme-lover." Kinda' want to read that last one, right?

Why this is a good method: It can not only be very personal but also lead to some interesting nuances, especially if you sometimes experience conflict between two of your identities.



#### 6. The Home Method

How it works: Describe one place or several places where you're in your element and say why.

Some students choose to focus on a single place they feel at home (like a particular coffee shop or the weight room). Other students choose to describe the many places they feel at home (the stage, the lab, in their imagination). Both can work well and lead to a lot of variety.

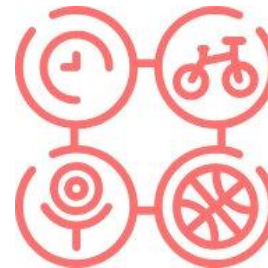
Why this is a good method: Here we get to see you in your natural state, or states. The multiple "homes" method in particular is a great way to demonstrate that you can adapt to any environment—including that of the college you're applying to.



## 7. The Uncommon Extracurricular Activity Method

How it works: Choose an extracurricular activity, make sure it's uncommon (either in your choice of topic or what you say about it), and use it to reveal different parts of who you are.

**Heads-up:** This can be one of the most difficult methods to do well, which is why I've listed it last. Why is it so tricky? Many students write about the same activities (debate, piano, volleyball, etc.), so the degree of difficulty is increased, as it can be difficult to stand out. Also, if you're applying to selective schools, you'll likely be asked in a separate essay to expand on your most important extracurricular activity. If you've already written about that in your main statement, what will you write about?



Why this can be a good method: I actually don't think writing about an extracurricular activity is a good method for the personal statement, as I find it often leads to common essay topics. I've listed it here, however, because many students choose to do this, so I wanted to provide some guidance. But I'd suggest trying the other methods first. If several of those don't work, then try this one.

Exceptions (i.e., cases when you maybe should write about an extracurricular activity):

If you're being recruited in a particular thing, or it's all over your resume and it would be weird not to write about it. Examples from past students include being ranked among the top 5 policy debaters in the world or playing for your country's national cricket/soccer/rugby team.

If it's an incredibly unusual extracurricular activity. Examples from past students include medieval blacksmithing, indoor sky-diving, bee-keeping, and being the world's top-ranked Magic The Gathering player.

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## Outlines

### Full Narrative Outline 1.0

Example (you can delete this and create your own outline):

#### Challenges:

- *Domestic abuse*
- *Alcoholic step-dad*
- *Little brother Fernando's birth*
- *Learning I was undocumented*

#### Effects:

- *My brother and I shared the mental strain*
- *Father was arrested*
- *Money was tight*
- *Mom worked two jobs*
- *My brother and I took care of one another*
- *We kept to ourselves when dealing with financial and medical issues*
- *I avoided going on certain school trips*
- *At times I was discouraged from meeting new people*
- *My grades started to slip*

#### What I Did About It:

- **Took care** of my youngest brother
- **Became** my own teacher
- **Learned** how to fix a bike, swim, socialize
- **Found** a job to help pay bills
- **Improved** my grades
- **Shattered** a school swimming record
- **Taught myself** how to play instruments
- **Won** the honor of being the first student in my school to pass the AP Physics 1 exam
- **Took on** several leadership roles in clubs
- **Tutored and counseled** friends and peers

#### What I learned:

- Independence: Going through the experiences with my father helped me see that I wanted to not only experience more freedom for myself and for my mom, but for other women as well.
- Autonomy: Going through the experience of supporting my family and learning I was undocumented helped me realize that I wanted to be able to have more freedom to make choices for myself--what I was interested in--instead of what others were interested in.



## First Narrative Draft



## Montage Outline(s) 1.0

*Feel free to use this space to outline as many Montage ideas as you like.*

### Sample Outline Chart for the Laptop Stickers Essay

(Feel free to delete this example to create your own)

| Values                      | Examples<br>(aka How I've<br>Developed These<br>Qualities) | Insights<br>(aka "So What" Moments)                          |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Creativity                  | "We <3 Design" sticker                                     | Helped me develop my own style                               |
| Open-mindedness             | "Common Threads"<br>sticker from<br>TEDxYouth@Austin       | Culture is created, not just consumed in Austin              |
| Humor, Family               | Poop Emoji sticker from my brother                         | I love my brother                                            |
| Courage, Social Awareness   | "Lol ur not Harry Styles" sticker                          | I used to internalize my beliefs more, but don't as much now |
| Entrepreneurship            | "Catapult" (startup incubator) sticker                     | Helped me discover career                                    |
| Meaningful work that I love | "Thank God it's Monday" sticker                            | I hope it's always like this                                 |
|                             |                                                            |                                                              |
|                             |                                                            |                                                              |
|                             |                                                            |                                                              |



## First Montage Draft



## Montage Outline(s) 2.0

*Feel free to use this space to outline as many Montage ideas as you like.*

### Sample Outline Chart for the Laptop Stickers Essay

(Feel free to delete this example to create your own)

| Values                      | Examples<br>(aka How I've<br>Developed These<br>Qualities) | Insights<br>(aka "So What" Moments)                          |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Creativity                  | "We <3 Design" sticker                                     | Helped me develop my own style                               |
| Open-mindedness             | "Common Threads"<br>sticker from<br>TEDxYouth@Austin       | Culture is created, not just consumed in Austin              |
| Humor, Family               | Poop Emoji sticker from my brother                         | I love my brother                                            |
| Courage, Social Awareness   | "Lol ur not Harry Styles" sticker                          | I used to internalize my beliefs more, but don't as much now |
| Entrepreneurship            | "Catapult" (startup incubator) sticker                     | Helped me discover career                                    |
| Meaningful work that I love | "Thank God it's Monday" sticker                            | I hope it's always like this                                 |
|                             |                                                            |                                                              |
|                             |                                                            |                                                              |
|                             |                                                            |                                                              |



## **Second Montage Draft**

**Workshop Feedback (super quick survey):**  
**<https://tinyurl.com/CEGworkshopfeedback1>**



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# Additional Brainstorming Exercises

## 21 Details

Make a list of 21 details from your life, interesting facts that describe some small, random part of who you are. They could be how you got interested in the career you want to pursue, something about your identity, where is “home” for you?

1.



## Identifying Your "Islands of Personality"

Imagine if Pixar was making *Inside Out* about you ([click here](#) for the clip). What would be your "Islands of Personality"? They tend to be things you love or know a lot about. Pick three-four of them and complete the charts below. Feel free to scan through the Values exercise in the previous page to complete the core values part of the chart.

### Island of Personality #1

| One thing you love/know                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--|
|                                                              |  |
| Connect it to different Core Values that make up who you are |  |
|                                                              |  |
|                                                              |  |
|                                                              |  |
|                                                              |  |
|                                                              |  |

### Island of Personality #2

| One thing you love/know                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--|
|                                                              |  |
| Connect it to different Core Values that make up who you are |  |
|                                                              |  |
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### Island of Personality #3

|                                                                     |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>One thing you love/know</b>                                      |  |
|                                                                     |  |
| <b>Connect it to different Core Values that make up who you are</b> |  |
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### Island of Personality #4

|                                                                     |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <b>One thing you love/know</b>                                      |  |
|                                                                     |  |
| <b>Connect it to different Core Values that make up who you are</b> |  |
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## Lists to complete with a loved one/someone you trust

Complete this list alone first. Then without telling your answers to your friend/family member, have him/her give his/her answers about you and type them here. Acknowledge the ones you may have missed that someone else may have noticed.

| List the things about yourself that you <u>don't</u> need to change |                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Your answers                                                        | Loved one's answers |
|                                                                     |                     |

| List the ways you think someone you love would describe you |                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Your answers                                                | Loved one's answers |
|                                                             |                     |



## The “Everything I Want Colleges to Know About Me” List

Some people think this part is bragging, but you have to acknowledge that you’re unique and have amazing things to offer the world (oh yeah, and college). The exercises above can help you complete this chart. Underneath are some examples.

| 10 Things I Want Colleges To Know About Me |
|--------------------------------------------|
| 1)                                         |
| 2)                                         |
| 3)                                         |
| 4)                                         |
| 5)                                         |
| 6)                                         |
| 7)                                         |
| 8)                                         |
| 9)                                         |
| 10)                                        |

- I am half Filipino and half Egyptian
- I travel a lot (have been to countless countries such as Egypt, the Philippines, Netherlands, Italy, Jamaica, Bahamas, Mexico, Guam, etc....)
- I have played the violin for over 11 years and I LOVE IT
- I do canoe paddling year round. We once saw dolphins swimming by us as we paddled out deep in the ocean.
- I have an entrepreneurial mind. I made \$300 in a week selling coffee at my dad's office when I was 7. I named the booth the “Coffee Cafe” and had my own menu with various drinks as well as a bean grinder. I ended up donating all of the profits to my missionary friend Kate who was leaving for India. When I was 12 I made \$70 selling online ebooks about basketball that I wrote. I painted curb address numbers for neighbors when I was 11 and made about \$100 off of that.
- I like weightlifting. I also sell supplements to my friends at school. I buy them in bulk online and mix some, for example, whey with creatine, and re-brand them (not FDA approved, uh-oh) and sell them for profit.
- I love reading (my bookshelf is stacked)

