

Self analysis essay sample



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In reflecting on myself and who I am, there are a multitude of factors to consider, including but not limited to my personal theories about my past and present life situations, cultural experiences, upbringing and family life, and overall view about how, want, why, when, and where to live ethically and well. When a person is born into the world, one immediately begins to make associations about right and wrong, truth and dishonesty, and happy experiences as opposed to upsetting ones.

As a person grows, the experience of being in the world always includes both the self and the other, the person and one's environment, so it will be through both a personal and subjective lens as well as through a more opinionated and objective lens about others and my world that I write this paper. In order to be honest about my life as it pertains to me personally, I also must be at liberty to describe what and how I have viewed the outside experiences in my life.

Everything a person does or perceives is both subjective and objective, because people are always in a state of interchange with the surrounding people they've known and places they've been. First of all, I'm now 23 years old, and although I consider myself to be American, I'm also Chinese and identify strongly with both my country of origin as well as my new home. Being a young adult male has its own struggles and joys, and being a young adult Chinese American who's experienced living life for many years in two different worlds, in two different countries, has a few additional and unique struggles and joys.

When I came from China 10 years ago, I was used to being in and experiencing a very humble and impoverished world. People in China in my previous neighborhood were often very poor as well as very nationalistic and perhaps controlled or submissive to the Chinese government. Although I remember happy times and have fond memories of China from my early childhood, I also know that it was hard for us. My parents had very little and didn't see much hope of having more. I felt, at times, their hopelessness and their fear and also knew that they loved one another and loved me.

Emotionally, my experience was mixed. I remember that I enjoyed school in China. I didn't have a lot of books and the school building itself was not very beautiful, but the teacher was mostly nice to us. Sometimes, the teachers took students to other rooms to be punished, and that was not pleasant, but I think my school life was mostly normal. If I look at my childhood school papers, I know that my work in school as a young child was very nationalistic, for the Chinese are very strict and proud, but all nations are proud of their people and ways. However, at home, I was often hungry.

We did not have a lot of food to eat, and my parents were often desperate for help. There was not much business, and young adults often left our seaside village to possibly find more work in the overcrowded cities. My family loved to live in the country, but being able to farm and fish and care for the family supplies with poor soil and few neighbors proved to be very difficult. In an attempt by the Chinese government to develop a nearby military base by the seaside, our family's land was taken by the authorities. We had no choice but to sell our home and property for very little money.

Due to the infringement of our human rights and the suffering we had endured in our small village at the hand of the communist dictatorship, we found an opportunity to come to America. I remember my parents cried at the thought of leaving China and our extended family members but were relieved to maybe find a better way of life in a new and enterprising country like America. As a small boy, I was sad to have to leave my friends, several boys named Chuli and Nahlin and a young girl named Ritsuma, however, seeing the excitement and preparations of my family gave me hope that the new adventure in the land called America would be fun.

Before we left, we were living with my grandparents, and I remember the cake my grandmother gave to me for the trip in the airplane. I was so proud to have this sugary cake, and I ate it before we even left China. In coming to America, I know that my parents felt overwhelmed, everything was so busy and colorful, yet everyone seemed to be so separate sometimes. In China, everyone tried to help the other and people were often too nosy and bossy, but here in America, it seemed as if no one cared really what another person did.

Each person in America was like a unique seed caught in the wind, not knowing where or how the other seeds were flying, bustling off to the next adventure, doing what they wanted. In China, people were more like sands in a glass, everyone bunched together and everyone knowing that it would always be the same and always together in one place, doing the will of the government, doing what they could. My father expected to be able to find good work as a fisherman, and he did, but without other Chinese Americans coming to our aid, it would have been very hard for him.

He was thankful to have found a community of people to surround us and help us, for we needed it. Being out in the country near the wetlands, my parents tried to find a good school for me, but there was no elementary school nearby. I homeschooled in a group of other Chinese children until highschool, and we took some English language lessons and watched American TV. It was not easy for me to adjust to America in the beginning, but as Chinese Americans, we stuck together with other Chinese people, and we created our own small China on the Gulf Coast.

Going to highschool for me was a challenge. My language skills were not very developed, and I don't think people really understood me or wanted to know me. It was like they were scared of me—or maybe I was scared of them. Many of the kids in highschool were so spoiled, I think. They had everything, they had never known what it was like to be hungry and have not even a cup of rice or a small fish to eat. Sometimes I just felt angry. How could so many people in one school act so foolishly, I often thought.

Maybe I was jealous of them, but I don't think so. I think it was a good experience for me to realize that many Americans can be selfish and materialistic. During highschool, I clung to my Chinese roots and often dreamed of living in China again. People had little in China, but at least they were not so greedy and silly. At the end of high school, I began to feel better about friends and school, perhaps because I met Lihn, my first girlfriend. Lihn was also a Chinese American, and we shared some of the same cultural and familial similarities.

For instance, we were never allowed to be alone together, and my parents often reminded us that they had not approved of our dating yet, that they had to get to know Lihn and her family better, and anyway, if we stayed together, we would have to live near them—all kinds of rules. In the end, Lihn and I did not stay together. In considering college, I decided that I needed to break away from my family for a while. Being under constant watch was too much for me, and I felt the powerful urge to move away from my parent's home.

Lihn's parents had not approved of me anyway, perhaps because my father was a fisherman and not an engineer or some "higher" profession like Lihn's father, but I was encouraged by our year of dating that I would be able to find another girl in college, and I began my new life as a single adult male, away from my family and out of the nest, excited to begin the new chapter of my life. College has been good for me so far, and I've enjoyed living alone, although I have to live with 2 roommates.

My studies are going well, and I'm happy to say that I have a new girlfriend named Celia. She's Italian American and perhaps more loud and independent than my parents would like her to be, but she's a wonderful woman, and I enjoy her crazy stories and her beautiful smile, her dark hair and skin. I can tell that I too am a more outgoing and decisive young man than I was as a small boy. It's rare now that I listen to the orders of other people without thinking for myself first, when I remember that in my early life, I was never resistant to authority.

However, I think a mixture of my Chinese past and my American present are what make me who I am and is also a good balance. Too many Americans think that their actions are totally separate from other people or family life, and this is not true. I'm happy that Chinese and American experiences have taught me to both be family oriented, nationalistic, and proud of my race as well as open minded, independent, and worldly. I wouldn't want to be a loose and special seed flying carelessly through the wind, but I wouldn't want to be one of many sands sitting tight in a glass jar.

What's right for me is to live my life Chinese in the ways that Chinese are helpful, in the way they stick together, in the way that they're busy with everyone else's business, in the way that they try to hold you close, and to live my life American in the ways that Americans are helpful, in the way that they allow for independence, in the way that they expect self reliance, in the way that they let you be how you are. That's what makes me who I am, and that's what makes me well.