

**Essay Brainstorm:**

**List guide words here** (what are the top characteristics you want a college to know about you?):

**Experiences:**

Write down a memory of when you helped someone who was having a hard time.\

What did you do that made a difference?

When have you felt *vulnerable*?

What makes you feel *supported*?

Not one of the crowd: Write down a time when you felt different than everyone else.

When have you dared to be different? To actually do something differently, or when you chose to take a different path. (The previous slide was about how you *felt*, this is about when you *acted* differently.)

Share about a time when you brought people together to reach a common goal.

Write down a time when you acted as a mediator or a peacemaker.

Write about a time when you were a leader or a role model. Have you led a group toward something they might not have done or gone-to on their own?

Have you ever changed a family member's mind about something? Why was it important to you?

Write about a time when you failed or struggled, or maybe something you are still working on that you have not yet succeeded at.

Stories found in your activities experiences (travel, clubs, jobs, volunteering):

### **Identity:**

#### ***Essence Objects Exercise — 5 mins***

**Essence Objects Exercise** (adapted from Ethan Sawyer, College Essay Guy)

Imagine a box.

In this box is a set of objects.

Imagine that each one of these is an essence object for you.

What do I mean? Each object represents one of your fundamental qualities.

So each object is more than just an object.

What objects will you place in the box?

<i>Ex: a well-worn North Carolina Tar Heel basketball.</i>	<i>Why? I came home from the hospital wearing Carolina Blue, so I've been a Carolina fan, literally, since birth. I've spent more time on a basketball court than almost anywhere else (which is why the ball is well-worn), and basketball represents my connection with my dad: when I was a kid we'd watch Carolina games and play basketball for hours. This basketball is more than a basketball.</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

*FOOD!*

- Write down your ethnic background or your national heritage.
- What food or meal is a favorite in your family?

- Something that has been passed down through generations?
- Is there a particular food that you eat at one time of the year - write down your favorite memory that it evokes.

If you knew me, if you REALLY knew me, you'd know... What?

What (or who) brings you joy? Why?

What are you grateful for? How does gratitude motivate you?

What do you choose to spend your time doing when you have free time? What do you intentionally make time for?

What makes you feel most like yourself?

## VALUES EXERCISE: HERE IS A LIST OF VALUES FOR YOU TO CHOOSE FROM

COMPASSION

COMMUNITY

INSPIRATION

MONEY

INTELLECT

STATUS

FINANCIAL

GAIN

LAUGHTER

SERENITY

PHYSICAL

CHALLENGE

RESPONSIBILITY

COMPETITION

CAREER

FAME

WORKING WITH OTHERS

FREEDOM

SECURITY

STRENGTH

SELF-CONTROL

HUNGER

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

TRUST

FAITH

INVOLVEMENT

ADVENTURE

VULNERABILITY

ADAPTABILITY

COOPERATION

PASSION

WISDOM

KNOWLEDGE

GROWTH

EXPERTISE

ORDER

PRIVACY

SELF-EXPRESSION

STABILITY

AUTONOMY

RISK

BALANCE

COURAGE

FAMILY

EMPATHY

WORKING ALONE

HEALTH & FITNESS

MEANINGFUL WORK

SUCCESS

LEADERSHIP

HELPING OTHERS

INFLUENCE

FAST-PACED WORK

LOVE

DIVERSITY

LISTENING

COMMITMENT

CHALLENGES

COLLABORATION

SOCIAL CHANGE

BEAUTY

ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS

QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS

TRAVEL

DECISIVENESS

CURIOSITY

SPIRITUALITY

LOYALTY

HONESTY

INDEPENDENCE

SUPERVISING OTHERS

RECOGNITION

ACCOUNTABILITY

DEMOCRACY

CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS

RELIGION

RESPECT

CREATIVITY

COMMUNICATION

CHANGE AND VARIETY

COMPASSION

NATURE

JOB TRANQUILITY

PASSION

EXCITEMENT

POWER

CREATIVITY

FRIENDSHIP

RESOURCEFULNESS

FLEXIBILITY

# WHAT DO I VALUE?

WRITE YOUR TOP 10 VALUES HERE:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

WRITE YOUR TOP 5 VALUES HERE:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

WRITE YOUR TOP 3 VALUES HERE:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

WHAT'S NUMBER 1? AND HOW DOES IT MANIFEST ITSELF IN YOUR LIFE?

**Details:**

Everything I want colleges to know about me:

**21 Details** (adapted from Ethan Sawyer, College Essay Guy)

***Make a list of 21 details from your life, interesting facts that describe some small, random part of who you are. Here are some examples from my life:***

- I eat ice cream with a doll's spoon.
- I eat Takis with chopsticks so I don't get my fingers dirty
- My favorite game is Scrabble.
- I am obsessed with cooking shows like *Top Chef* and *Worst Cooks in America*.
- I had to wear a patch over my eye in elementary school to correct a lazy eye, and everyone called me a pirate.
- I sewed my prom dress for my senior prom.
- I never, ever eat anything other than "official" breakfast food for my first meal of the day, no matter what time I wake up. "Pizza for breakfast??!! NEVER!!!"
- I am terrified of having my blood drawn. I have passed out twice just talking about giving blood, and passed out and ended up in the ER for 8 hours once when I actually gave blood.
- My most painful childhood memory was of my mom yelling at me for lying to her.
- I can stand on my head for almost two minutes.
- I am only allowed sugar cereal on my birthday, and I always choose Fruity Pebbles.

And so on...

**Now it's your turn:**

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)
- 6)
- 7)
- 8)
- 9)
- 10)
- 11)
- 12)
- 13)
- 14)
- 15)
- 16)

17)

18)

19)

20)

21)

Life Transitions: Do you have a Coming-of-Age moment?

Sometimes life's changes are sudden and unexpected; have you experienced something that you feel changed by?

Write about a time when you have apologized or been humbled by a situation.

Something that drives you towards impact and change, or a time when you have created change in your community.

**Highlight your favorite five ideas for your personal statement and supplemental essays.**