

Major accomplishment

Being a volunteer serving autistic children, elderly and disabled taught me the virtue of patience and the importance of being observant when communicating with the others. When I first encountered autistic children, I assumed my role was to set boundaries for them to help them establish daily routines. Of course, my efforts were of no avail. What was worse, I even encountered resistance that the children would do the exact opposite of what I told them to.

Frustration was inevitable in the process of figuring out how to communicate with autistic children. However, I determined to learn and to adapt. So, I stayed on in the volunteer group and observe. I soon realized the importance of establishing trust before any sort of communication could be established. As far as I could learn from my observation, playing games was the most effective way of establishing trust.

I then researched for some ice-breaking games online and chose the ones that would allow the most interaction. My role with the group of autistic children began to change from an outsider / observer and became part of their group.

Even though I would never be described as an arrogant person, but assumptions that I brought with me in communicating with autistic children, elderly and disabled explained the initial communication difficulty. I should not assume an authoritative role in despite of the cultural background, level of intelligence, physical condition of the counterpart. Having the patience to observe and to adapt is of utmost important in building relationships. I hope by being a psychology major, I will acquire a better understanding of social behaviors and child development, which will enable me to adapt better and interestingly, learn more about myself!

Other relevant info

Psychology is my intended major and McMaster would be my first choice should I be accepted. I trust the way I learn will fit well into McMaster's way of teaching- emphasizing relationships between academic studies, career exploration and community involvement.

My interest in psychology was nurtured throughout my community service involvement in high school. Serving different kinds of people really stimulated my curiosity in understanding their behavior and way of thinking. Most importantly, I want to learn how I can communicate with them. In fact, learning how to communicate with different people often ends up in a thought provoking self-discovery journey. This is attested in my volunteer experience with autistic children, elderly and disabled as described in my essay #2. If I were admitted to McMaster, I would continue to volunteer in the Hamilton community and I believe this would help me refine my career aspirations.