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## Pressure: College Admission Essay Sample

"Pressure is the amount of force exerted on an object by the air above it," my physics teacher explained. I jotted down the definition but then began to think...if only it were that simple.

So what is pressure really? Pressure is juggling three AP classes with three varsity sports. It is practicing five nights a week with one of the best youth soccer teams in the country and then studying during the car ride home. It is missing weeks of school while traveling around the world to play the sport I love while not missing a single assignment in class, but most of all, pressure is what you make of it. I have thrived in the classroom and on the soccer field because, when handled correctly, anxiety-filled situations can bring out the best in a person. In the words of George S. Patton, "Pressure makes diamonds."

Academic excellence is most often achieved in pressure-filled conditions. The more ambitious students in school naturally feel some pressure to excel. When this pressure is coupled with the demanding work of advanced placement classes, students have two choices: they can meet the challenge, or they can crash. Fortunately, I have been able to master academic pressure and use it to my advantage. By maintaining a confident, "bring it on" type of attitude, I convince myself that I am ready for any challenge. The sooner the deadline, the harder the material, and the more strenuous the work, the more motivated I am to excel.

Much like in academics, high pressure situations can promote athletic success. There is always some nervous excitement before an athletic competition, but those who can harness this pressure are most likely to succeed. A prime example of thriving under pressure can be seen in my trip to Ireland last April with the regional soccer team. We played in a tournament where we were fortunate enough to reach the finals against England. With the score tied at two, we were forced to go to a penalty shootout to decide the winner. Representing my country in front of more than 2,000 screaming fans and knowing that if I missed we would go home with a silver medal instead of gold, I volunteered to take one of the shots. As I approached the ball, I blocked out the fans and the weight of my teammates' expectations and reminded myself that this was only a game. I then stepped forward and coolly struck the ball into the back of the net.

Technically speaking, "pressure is the amount of force exerted on an object by the air above it." However, pressure is also a force that ignites my best academic and athletic performances.

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