ENTRY 1

Date: 5 October 2015

Social Loafing refers to the concept that individuals are prone to exert less effort on a task if they are in group than they are when they were attempting to achieve a goal on their own. It occurs when a person is performing a task as part of the group, individual efforts cannot be identified. Now that I understand this concept, I realised I have experienced this concept before during the previous semester of my FNBE course. It was in the middle of my semester. The lecturer briefed us slightly on our individual and group assignment for our 3D game board submission. After the briefing, it was time for us to divide ourselves into groups of six people or seven people.

However, the question was how we were going to separate our initial pool of friends? We made a decision to draw lots. We added two more members to complete our group of seven. At first, I felt confident with my group as I knew most of them already. Besides that, all my group members appeared to be willing to be synergic to complete this mind-boggling task. I concluded that they were all quite hardworking people as their individual submissions were nicely done. Before we could carry out the group task, it was essential for us to complete our individual projects. For our individual task, we were asked to design our own 3D game board. We were all cooperative in completing this individual task.

The person with the best and most suitable design and suggestion of the 3D Game board would be chosen to be created. From my group, Teoh’s 3D game board-design was chosen by the lecturer. During the first meeting, everyone was enthusiastic and happy to carry out the task together. Everyone in our group was confident that we would do a good job. But, the case doesn’t appear so. For the group task, we were instructed to modify the chosen 3D game board suggestion and build a model of it. This model includes the packaging, instruction manual and the game board itself. We also made a trailer for our game and prepared decorations for our booth. We even got matching group uniforms and prepared to present our model. The duration for this project was a month. Since I thought there were a lot of members in my group who were fully capable of doing the job, I procrastinated for the first couple of weeks.

We barely discussed about the project in the first two weeks. By the third week, we realised that there was too much to do. Some of team members started panicking and almost cracked under the pressure. Our game was very complicated and we were doing the job at a very slow speed as we were all relying on one another too much. We were still discussing about build-up of the game board. For example, we still didn’t know how to make the game board three-dimensional and we had yet to decide and buy all the materials needed to make the model. Moreover, we still needed to colour it. We found it really hard because our group lacked creativity. We still tried our best despite that. Due to our lack of time, we still had a lot to do even in the last week. We only finished recording the trailer and bought the material for the model at the last week. We started on some parts of the model but we had yet done the packaging and many more.

During the last two days, we were in turbo speed. We even stayed in school overnight, trying desperately to finish it. Even though we were trying our best, we were still slow as two of our members were unable to participate in finishing the project. It was as if they did not care as much as we do for this group project. We wanted them in our group as they were seemingly responsible people who completed their individual work on time. As it turns out, when push comes to shove and a team is depending on them, they slacked and expected the other members to pick up where they left off. We were angry, of course, but we had no choice since we had not much time left. We hurried, our minds blurred from the lack of sleep. On the last night, we stayed up till dawn for the second night in a row. We quickly did everything. In the morning, it was time to submit our final project. We had everything ready at the eleventh hour but it wasn’t as beautiful as we thought it would be.

Even though we did our best, I knew it wasn’t our best. Some of us didn’t put in as much effort. As a result, I think that we excel better on our own individual project.

ENTRY 2

Date: 19 October 2015

Schema is a cognitive framework used to identify and process information. It operates like mental index file where each index card represents a different category of information. Once acquired, individual schemas can be accessed for future reference. In other words, a schema describes both mental and physical actions involved in understanding and knowing. They are categories of knowledge that help us to interpret and understand the world. As experiences happen, this new information is used to modify, add to or change previously existing schemas.

Schemas can exist for people, places, events or other stimuli and are formed on the basis of experience. It is automatically created to guide us to understand the world. I am really sorry to say that this concept has influenced me before. When I was seven years old, my mother sent me to a Chinese primary school. Even if you guess you’ll know there are more Chinese students and teachers. However, there are always a few students of other races, namely the Malay and Indian students. Until now, it still amazed me that they could speak fluent Chinese. Anyways, once I encounter an Indian girl. I didn’t know her name but I find she has a strange odour. There were always rumours that she did not bath or had lice in her hair. I know it is not right for me to jump to conclusion but I did. I was not proud of it but it is the truth. It was probably because of the influences of my fellow classmates that I formed a schema of Indians.

When I was form 1, I was enrolled into a public secondary school named St. David’s High School. Looking around the school on the first day, the first thing I thought was, “wow”. There were so many people from all walks of life. This school is the definition of the slogan “1Malaysia”. Even though there were a lot of Chinese students, there were also an equal number of Malay and Indian students. They were also all speaking in English. It was a little bit foreign and new for me. When I walked into class, most of the students were already sitting down chatting with our new classmates. I did not know most of them, just some of my former school mates. There were just a few empty seats left. I found a vacant seat in front of my former school mates which coincidentally was beside an Indian girl. It was as if fate has brought be to this position. I hesitated at first, but after contradicting with myself, I decided to sit down. When I sat down, I sneaked glances at her. She didn’t seem like the description I made for an Indian. She didn’t have the strange smell and she looked kind. She even smiled at me. I did not know how to start the conversation. Fortunately, she introduced herself and I reciprocated. Her name was Jayaletcumi. We talked a little and found that she was quite a clever and funny person.

From that day onwards, my schema of an Indian change. I do not see them as they were before. Even though we do not share the same interest, we kind of clicked. We shared everything. For example, we helped each other in studies, have group studies together, discussed about our family problems and even talked about our favourite idols although they were not the same. We were inseparable for three years. We were both quiet girls, but together we were noisy because we laughed a lot in class. The teachers even had to shush us sometimes. I felt very happy to meet a friend like her. Unfortunately, after those three years, we both separated and went to different classes for our Form 4 classes. The class that I went to has more Chinese students. However, because of Jaya, I was more drawn to the group of Indian girls. Sometimes, I even felt that they were better than those Chinese girls who were so afraid of losing at something. However, that is human nature, and we cannot change that. Soon enough, I found my group of friends which consist of two Indian girls, Maya and Neshi, two Chinese girls, Eunice and me and a Malay girl named Bella. They are the best bunch of friends I ever had. They are all so enthusiastic, cheerful and friendly.

Until now, I still wished Jaya and I could go to same class so that we could be the awesome twin but, sadly things doesn’t always go as plan. Maybe it was because we had both found new friends or the different classes were drifting us apart, but soon, we seldom talked to each other anymore. Even so, I still consider her as one of my best friend. She had made me realised and modify the way I think towards Indian people. For that, I am grateful.

ENTRY 3

Date: 26 October 2015

Self-fulfilling Prophecy is the predictions or expectations, whether it is positive or negative, about an event or situation that affects an individual behavior in such a way that it causes those predictions to come true and be fulfilled. In other words, it is when a person becomes the stereotype that is held about them.

In secondary school, my grades weren’t so good. The only subjects I ever excel in were Mathematics and English. My Science was just moderate. All my other subjects were bad. For example, I got only a C for my Geography, Chinese, and Malay while my History and “Kemahiran Hidup” were always at the edge of failing. No matter how hard I tried, I just could not pull my grades up. It was like my brain and mind were contradicting with each other and just could keep up and concentrate properly. There was nobody else to blame besides me since I was just too lazy to study. Having an attention span of an ant didn’t help either. Moreover, I tend to study at the eleventh hour. By then, it was too late as last minute studying cannot get you anywhere. For instance, I would start cramming everything the teacher has taught, the notes and exercises they gave, overnight. It was hard, especially for those subjects like History and Geography that needs to be memorised efficiently to do well in paper. Since all my studying were done overnight, I barely gotten two hours of sleep for a few consecutive days. I remembered once I was so tired that I accidentally slept in the middle of my History paper. When the teacher announced that there was only 10 minutes left and asked us to check our papers, I nearly jumped out of my seat. I barely did my paper, much less finish it. Fortunately, all my History questions were in objective. I quickly circle what I know and simply circle those that I don’t. At last, I still manage to pass it but it was still just a pass.

When I was in Form 3, there was a public examination set by the government called the PMR examination. Eventhough my overall results were only average, my father and mother still had high expectations for me since I am the oldest among my younger siblings. I was even more stressed up since I have a genius for a sister who succeeds in anything. Even so, my parents always believe that I could. My grandmother always says that “if you think you can, then you can surely do it!” Normally, I would just shrug it off, but this year I have actually made a goal to succeed in it. Even my form teacher had given me “the talk”, telling me that I wasn’t doing too well and needed to improve. She discussed with my parents and even offered to tutor me. With so many people supporting and believing in me, I felt touched and started to give it a try. If anybody could do it, so can I right?

I started enrolling in tuition centre, paying extra attention in class, studying and revising, not to mention doing exercises. My friend, Jaya helped me a lot during these times. She explained and taught me the things that I don’t understand while I reciprocated. For example, she taught me History while I taught her Mathematics. I dropped my Chinese language class as I simply couldn’t cope with it anymore. My mother hesitated with that idea but still supported my decision. My midterm test results were slightly better than before. I did plenty of exercises and studied effectively. Soon, it was time for my PMR pre-examination. I just went with it without thinking too much and was surprised to know that my results were much better. It wasn’t straight A’s but I was still happy because there was improvement. I had gotten 3A’s, 3B’s and 1C’s. The assistant headmaster even went in our class to give a speech and individually speak to the targeted straight A’s students. I was really shocked and equally happy that I was one of them. As the saying goes, ‘no pain, no gain’. I continue working hard to achieve my goal.

When the PMR examination day arrived, I was nervous. However, I keep telling myself that I could do it. My family too, keep wishing me good luck. The questions were quite hard but I told myself not to panic. The examinations take place for 3 days. After that, it was heaven for us. Two months quickly ended, and we were asked to take our results. Everyone was nervous and excited, anticipated to take their results. We were all in the hall and I was sitting right beside Jaya. The straight A’s students were being called up to the stage. Suddenly, my name was being called. I was too shock for words. I couldn’t believe what I heard. Everybody was looking at me that instance. I quickly went up the stage and got my results. That day, I had experienced the concept of self-fulfilling prophecy. Although I am lazy, I told myself I could do it and so many people believed I could do it. Somehow the prediction came true.

ENTRY 4

Date: 2 October 2015

Counterfactual Thinking is the tendency to imagine different outcomes for an event that has past. Normally, it is associated with negative events. There are two types of counterfactual thinking. That is, upward counterfactuals and downward counterfactuals, both of which are different. Upward counterfactual thinking focuses more on how a certain situation could be better or could be done differently. It is usually done when somebody regret something from the past which would ultimately worsen our mood. On the other hand, downward counterfactual thinking occurs when a person thinks that a situation could be worse. This makes them feel better about themselves and improve their moods.

It was a typical Sunday evening when my family and I decided to go out for dinner. We had planned to eat ‘Satay Celup’ at Melaka Town since we haven’t been there for a long time. We all love it. My father is a businessman in the field of development. Thus, he entertains business associates even during weekend. My mother is not fond that my father works during weekends. She states that he hasn’t when enough time with our family. She even fought many times with my father to make the point. That evening, my father promised that he would meet us at the destination since he already brought out his own car. Therefore, my mother agreed and drove us out at 7.00pm sharp. In the car, it was like the many other days, we laughed, sang songs and chatted happily on the way there. At that time, I was ten years old while my sister and brother were eight years old and five years old respectively. As the oldest sibling, I should have been more discipline and tolerating. But maybe I was not thinking straight that day. The car ride took about half an hour. When we reached our destination, father was not there yet.

My mother called my father numerous times but the call couldn’t get through. My mother smiled at us and told us to choose what we wanted. I find that her smile didn’t quite reach her eyes. She called my father again and he finally answered and told my mom that the business associate has asked my father to have dinner with him. Since work was really important to him, he agreed. My mother was clearly very angry. When my mother was angry she has the tendency to scold the people around her. And since I was sitting beside her, out of nowhere, I have been scolded for small little things. I felt that it was not fair. So, when we were back in the car, I find fault on my brother and scolded him. After a while, war broke. We were fighting and throwing bad words at each other. When the traffic light turned red, my mother pulled up the breaks and turned to face me, sitting beside her and my younger siblings seated at the back. She scolded us and lectured us that it was not right for us to fight. I didn’t know what came over me to fight with my younger siblings. Except for the red traffic light, the road was pitch black. When my mother turned to the front angrily, she hit the accelerator and the car moved forward.

Suddenly, the car crashed into something. We were horrified. My mother went out and checked and was shocked to death that we crashed onto an old lady. My mother quickly asked me to sit at the back and brought the injured old lady into the car. Without hesitation, we went to the nearest hospital and prayed that the old lady was not so badly injured. In the car, the lady was moaning in pain. My brother and sister even cried, terrified by the situation. I sit there not knowing what to do but hugged my younger siblings. Not a moment too soon, we reached the hospital. My mom brought the lady down and called for help. The lady was quickly brought into the emergency room. My mother told us to sit inside the car, saying that our father would arrive in a while.

About 5 minutes later, father’s car parked in. My father and mother discussed something outside. Suddenly, I saw my aunt’s car pull in. My mom forced us into her car and say that we are spending the night at our aunt’s place. We simply followed her request although we do not know what was happening. We all wondered what the situation was but do not dare to ask. The next day, my curiosity got the best of me. I asked my parents about the old lady. They hesitated, but at the end still told us. The lady was hospitalized and with a few broken bones and ribs. It was not a minor injury. The old lady’s family even offered to sue my mother for reckless driving. At that time I still did not know what it means. All I know was there was a strong feeling in my heart, either guilt or regret. As I grow older, I have thought of this moment countless time. If only I would have been more enduring with my mother’s scolding. If only I didn’t pick a fight with my brother. If only I could lighten my mother’s mood… Then, this would not happen.

It may not be entirely my fault, but somehow I think I have made the situation worse than it could be. After two years, the old lady has died, whether it was because of old age or because of that fateful accident, I am not sure.

Entry 5

Date: 16 October 2015

Spotlight effect is the belief that our behavior, our appearance and even our internal state are obvious to others.

When I learnt this concept, the first thing that pops into my mind was the embarrassing moment I once had. It was a Monday morning, where I have overslept. When I looked at the time, I panicked and jumped out of my bed. Being too clumsy, I hit my head onto something and tripped. That was the start of a bad day I told myself. I had a quick bath and immediately changed into my uniform attire. We, the 2A2 students were supposed to have our oral test that day but I was simply not ready. I was the kind of girl that is never ready for a presentation or oral test. It was not because I didn’t prepare for it, as I always did the necessary preparation like memorising the script or reciting the passage. It was just that I always become nervous in front of a crowd. Normally, even just giving a presentation class would scare the life out of me. It was like what I learnt had slowly faded away. The more I looked at my fellow students, the more my voice cracked into utter silence. I just could not think straight. It always gave me the chills to be speaking in front of everybody.

The class was starting when I reached school. Luckily, I went into school just in time. Therefore, my name did not need to be jotted down by the prefects for disciplinary actions. I was starting to think the day wasn’t that bad after all. I just need to get through a simple oral test. It would be over in no time. When I went in the class, I saw most of the people were practicing for the oral test. Our English teacher has purposely exchanged classes with my other subject teachers, just so everyone could finish our oral test. Slowly, our names were being called to signal us it was time for our oral test. Since the name was called according to sequence, there were still a number of people in front of me since my name starts with a “v”. I quickly recited my passage. Soon, it was my turn. I tried to make it as smooth possible by referring to my draft once in a while. When I was done, I went back to my seat to wait for the others to finish. Unconsciously, I looked at my uniform and found that I was wearing my white uniform inside out. I blushed and looked down instantly. “Everyone must have noticed except me”, I thought. I felt very embarrassed.

I quickly excused myself to go to the toilet to change it. When I came back, I find that nothing was out of the ordinary. Everybody was doing their own things. Some students were chatting away quietly. Some were doing homework, while others were listening intently to the oral presentation. I sat down and asked my friend about the situation. I was surprised to hear that she did not even notice it. Looking around I find that barely anyone notice it. It was then I was experiencing the ‘spotlight effect’. I felt like everybody had watched my embarrassing moment but in actual fact people did not really notice anything. I realised it now that we view ourselves as the centre of our own universe. This also means that we are not the centre of another person’s universe. People do not really notice because they are busy in their own mind. They were probably wondering about anything from yesterday’s dinner to their future life plan.

Another scenario was when the school was almost over and everyone was preparing to go home. I knew that my grandmother and aunt were already waiting outside, as always. Therefore, I was waiting for the bell to ring so that I could rush out so that they could avoid the school’s horrible traffic. When the bell rang, I was always the first to run out and I was so proud of it. Now, I realised how childish I were before. I did not know why until that day. It seems like a classmate of mine is challenging me, ‘who is going to reach the school gate first?’ Being the person I am, I accepted the challenge. When we ran out, everything was going fine until suddenly, I tripped on a drain and fell on my face to the ground. My whole body felt an instant sting and pain shoot up from my body. Besides, I felt really embarrassed as there we were surrounded by plenty of people. Eventhough in pain, I quickly ran out to the car without looking at anybody.

The next day, I also obtain similar response as the previous scenario. It was as if nobody has noticed me falling. In conclusion, I know now that we should not be too quick to blush or look down because you have done something embarrassing, because normally other people would be too busy in their own world to notice you.