The Lazy Controller

As a child, I grew up curious about life and the reasoning behind why certain events occurred. One of my top five strengths includes evaluating matters strategically. To this day, I still enjoy the logical aspects of life and figuring out the reasoning behind why specific factors in life existed or made sense. Moreover, I became a learner in a variety of situations and developed the desire to gain certainty and knowledge of many topics. For instance, I like finding patterns in my work and discovering the relativity of situations. In turn, I enjoyed participating in activities such as completing scavenger hunts and solving puzzles. Additionally, I enjoy learning about how to build rapport in group dynamics through activities such as escape rooms.

One of my favorite activities in middle school included figuring out mind games or **cognitive illusions**. For example, one of my favorite cognitive illusions includes an optical illusion with a figure of a younger girl and an older woman. This image revealed that the perception you see of the image, whether you identified a younger girl or older woman, reflected heavily on your assumptions about the world. At first, the only image I recognized consisted of a young girl in the optical illusion. I did not notice the optical illusion contained two pictures until my teacher pointed out that she recognized an older woman in the image. To view both images, I remember reevaluating the image with more effort. With that, I turned on my **system 2** and put around 30 minutes to find the older women. Additionally, I remember asking people to point out other attributes of the older women's perception before I could see both pictures. I learned the impacts of the **resemblance heuristic**, and how heavily I relied on my previous experience to examine the pictures. This heuristic also displays how internal **biases** can affect our perceptions and thought processes. Initially, I used a significant amount of effort to examine the image; however, after solving many mind puzzles, I realized my way of thinking towards puzzles became **flow**. The flow allowed me to use less effort to figure out similar puzzles and I found more enjoyment in mind games. Furthermore, figuring out similar puzzles required less effort or became automatic as I used my **system 1**.

In addition to cognitive illusions, I enjoy scavenger hunts. Similar to mind games, I recognized how scavenger hunt riddles also required the use of system 2. Furthermore, with utilizing my system 2 I realized that scavenger hunts also added to **cognitive load** because of how much thought teams needed to figure out puzzles. The cognitive load also increased because scavenger hunts require thoughts in varying fields. For example, in the scavenger hunts I participated in the past, teams needed to remember each riddle answer, avoid distractors and kidnappers, and maintain group morale. All these **extraneous** and **intrinsic** activities create challenges in completing cognitive equations.

In addition to scavenger hunts, another activity that promotes the use of cognitive thinking includes escape rooms. Escape rooms enhance group bonding because they draw individuals to work together and put efforts as a team. The efforts involve applying system 2 and require individuals to work together to solve puzzles and riddles collectively. To escape the room, the teams need to learn how to work together on a time constraint. Over time as I continued to participate in more scavenger hunts, riddles became easier to solve and I learned that my **availability heuristic** broadened because ways to solve riddles came to my mind more easily and became readily available.

Through strategic activities throughout my childhood years, I learned that I use both my system 1 and system 2 to solve problems in my life. Moreover, learning about how our minds work within situations helped me gain a better understanding of the way I utilize skills in specific subjects. Awareness of these skills contributes to my knowledge of persuasion and benefits the

way I choose to go about learning topics. Through recognizing my ways of thinking, I can familiarize myself with the tasks that require a lot of effort and figure out ways to make tasks less straining.