“The Harmony of Life” by Michael Jacobsohn is a piece written by this student as part of his Harvard University application. Michael represents the stereotypical all American kid. For instance, he plays football and lifts weights. In the essay, he reveals a secret that he has been harboring. This secret is his love for musicals. He has felt it necessary to maintain the secret because many of his friends and family would not understand such a “macho guy” having an appreciation for musicals. In fact, when one of his friends saw a draft of his essay, he thought it was funny. However, Michael Jacobson is convinced that it is more than a possibility and believes that “his love for musicals reconcile(s) itself with other facets of his personality (Jacobsohn 319).

This essay is very important because many students are ashamed of interests or talents they have because of how they feel others will perceive them. For instance, many students are ashamed of their academic abilities because of the ways other people view the “smart kids.” Similarly, many students will not try out for extracurricular activities and become productive members of their college because of the image their friends will have of them.

Students need to take a more independent attitude towards the things they want out of life. It should be acceptable to do whatever makes you happy. If a girl would like to play football, it should not matter. On the other hand, boys should not be embarrassed to take ballet. People should find solace in the things that bring joy to and enrich their lives. However, this can only happen when you have enough self-confidence to look beyond what others think. What you
want has to be more important. Then and only then, will you dictate your own happiness. Until then, your joys will always be dependent on what others think, or say, or do.