



THE VOICE

By Center for Online Learning Students for Center for Online Learning Students

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A Thought to Ponder:

"Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans."

-Allen Saunders

The Struggle



Having an opportunity that many others seek is ideal. The reason I say this is to shine a light on many issues that are being overlooked by today's generation. Take myself, for

example; I was born and raised in Haiti. Fortunately, my father had the opportunity to travel to the United States for work. Although everything seemed to be functioning quite well; there were some problems that had risen. Problems such as not having enough income to care for and educate five children while nursing a baby. With great hope and faith followed by endless nights of praying, my father managed to bring all six children to the US. The Lord answered my family's prayers.

I can remember that day; it seemed like we had just hit the jackpot on December 26th, 1997. The atmosphere felt new, the people were new, the city was new, and the language sounded exotic to French speakers such as me, my mother, as well as my siblings. The "floating on clouds" feeling lasted for a good while until reality set in. A few months after arriving from Haiti, I started school. However,

Managing Expectations

To be completely honest, my wife and I have never seen eye-to-eye on the importance of a college degree. When she graduated in 2004 with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, her immediate thought was to begin living her dream by becoming a police officer and eventually working her way into the FBI. During the summer of 2005, after an extremely long and arduous application process, she was offered employment with the local police department and began her academy training. She excelled – as I knew she would – despite being her own worst critic and, most importantly, she was happy.

I was too immature and (frankly) too stupid to be as supportive as I should have been and I missed many opportunities, but I was happy for her despite my own shortcomings.



One day, she came home and said she had realized that she didn't actually want to be a police officer. She had decided to resign and return to working in retail until she figured things out. She was extremely conflicted about this decision as it had been her

the struggles started because English is not my first language and the school systems are different. I managed to persevere through the hard times of trying to make friends and being ridiculed for not being one of the cool kids.

Never the less, my parents taught me not to lose faith and keep moving forward. Upon taking their advice, I was determined to finish high school and enroll in a technical program to help jumpstart myself in the workforce. After completing the technical program, I would then enroll into the county's community college for my associate's degree. Afterward, the chance of a lifetime happened; I was able to beat the odds and enrolled into my now Alma Matter, Saint Leo University. I was lucky even to make it this far. However, the struggle does not end here.

Working full-time and being a full-time parent of a handsome baby boy is quite the feat. Especially while trying to complete a master's degree. At times I think about quitting because I feel that my time is being consumed at an alarming rate. I only get to see my wife and child before everyone closes their eyes for the night and after my work alarm rings before starting the day over again. My struggle may differ from yours, but everyone has trials they must overcome. I want everyone to find ways to enjoy this time for it too will pass. Once you have faith and see the light at the end of the tunnel, you will see how great it feels to have stayed the course.

Kendall Brutus, Saint Leo University Alumni/
Graduate Student

Captivating Conversations with Britt



Hey Britt,
Is it just me or is driving etiquette a thing of the past? My commute to and from work is so stressful, because people don't seem to follow the rules of the road anymore and I often don't see police enforcing them. No one seems to use turn signals anymore (except for a

dream since before I knew her and the reason she'd decided to study criminal justice in the first place. Now, nothing on the surface of this seems out of place when you think about the importance of a college education in modernity. So you may be asking yourself, "What does this have to do with anything?" Well, she began to regret her decision because of the debt she was left with, which is a covenant facing almost everyone reading this.

Therein lies the rub as it were.



It's been 12 years since she graduated and she still owes money on her Stafford loans (insert groan here). In fact, because she was an out-of-state student for three of the four years she was in school, we will have that debt looming over us for the next 5 – 10 years. This was disheartening to her because, until recently, she was still working in retail and felt stuck despite her own successes. To be completely open about it, she had worked her way up the corporate ladder with her old company (starting out as a part-time, hourly associate, advancing to the position of store manager and even interviewed for a regional position), but she felt betrayed by her education because her dream, as it turned out, had not really been for her.

That happens.

But, I kept telling her how beneficial her degree would be one day: that it would pay off sooner or later. Not to mention the fact that she had the ability to apply to so many more opportunities than me because she has her degree, and I do not.

I can happily report that she was recently offered and accepted employment outside of the retail industry. She is now running a location for a completely different kind of business for roughly the same pay, which is like a raise when you think about the fact that

few remaining small town folk in the South) and solid white lines don't seem to prevent lane changes. If two lanes are merging with flashing signs a mile ahead, we still have those inconsiderate enough to speed to the front of the line to cut someone off to merge in as opposed to merging in where they are at. Before I rant for too long, I guess I just want to know your thoughts. How did we change to become today's society of careless drivers?

Sincerely,
Get off the Road!



Hi Get off the Road,
Great question, and yes I can completely sympathize to your rant. We have all have had these experiences with inconsiderate drivers. My answer to your question is simple. Over the years of advancement, we have lost respect for others, because we are always in such a rush. Not to mention, the population increase has added to the roadways, and BAM, we have rush hour traffic. When I am in the midst of the madness I try to look at it like this: I don't know what the other person is going through. Maybe the man that just cut me off is trying to reach his wife having their first child or maybe the girl speeding up in the merge lane is trying to get to her father that is ill so she may say her goodbyes. Even though it is frustrating, remember to always refrain from adding to the confusion with anger, because you never know what someone is going through and or capable of. Instead, turn on some relaxing tunes and try to stay positive.

Thanks for the question. Remember to stay safe!

Best Regards, Britt

Brittany Sampson, Student Writer/QA Columnist

she's working fewer hours and doesn't have travel as far from home, so I call it a win. I think she agrees with me even if she won't admit it. We all know how our women love to admit when their men are right.

As for me, my expectations after graduation revolve around those kinds of opportunities. I will finally be able to justify participating in areas that have been denied to me since I left school 11 years ago. I know what I want to do, and I anticipate being able to begin the paths to those goals. Still, I'm not naïve enough to think that I will leave school and immediately have my dream job waiting for me...unless someone from the U.S. Foreign Services or one of the major intelligence agencies is reading this, in which case the answer is "Yes, I would love to move to Asia or Central America and serve my country in any capacity you deem necessary."

In all seriousness, what are your expectations? What are your family's expectations? Communication is the key here: understanding how the people who matter to you define the word "expectation" is going to determine whether or not you live up to them (or it...whichever the case may be).

While my wife and I might not totally agree with the accumulation of student loan debt, we do support each other. One does not simply go back to school without talking it over first. And in our conversations, before I began my journey at Saint Leo three years ago, we laid out what was acceptable and what was not acceptable as a level of expectation once I graduated.

Even now, as I continue my job search, I am constantly reminded of the hundreds of opportunities on each job site that are not yet right for me. My qualifications – unique as they may be – do not always lend themselves to justify an application because the minimum acceptable education contains the words "completion of a 4-year degree" as a basic requirement for consideration and I'm not there yet. The key word in that sentence is "yet." (Five months!)

Truthfully, I don't expect to see an immediate return on my investment: I've given roughly 12 – 18 months as a reasonable timeframe for something to be

Resolving to Take Care of your Health

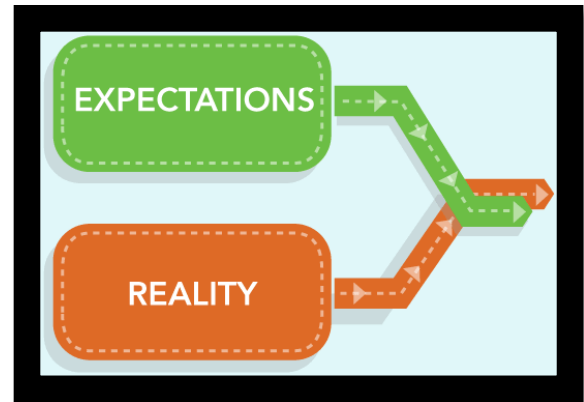
People get excited about making a change in their lives, but sometimes they make big goals that overwhelm them or forget to execute a plan to achieve them. As Benjamin Franklin once said, “If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!”



The lazy dog days of summer are here, again. Gym memberships that typically pick up in January for New Year’s resolutions are usually on the decline when the summer months come. People have places to go and things to do with their summer trips, BBQs, and relaxing at the beach, but it’s not the time to slack off on taking care one’s health.

That should be a year round resolution if one wants to see true lasting progress. I previously worked in the health club industry, and it was amazing to see how packed it was in the month of January, but I could always count on finding a parking space again when the weather was nice. You can still have big goals, but it may be easier to achieve them if you set smaller achievable goals that will ultimately add up to achieving your ultimate goal. For example, if your goal is to lose 50 pounds and you haven’t stepped foot in a gym in over a year, you might want to start w/ a goal of attaining a gym membership. Once you’ve done this, then your next goal may simply be to show up at least twice a week (increasing over time) for some type of activity. Then, you can start to narrow your goals down to realistic daily and weekly goals to start developing routines (e.g. 30 minutes or cardio training per week, lifting weights for isolate body parts, etc.). Make sure to choose activities that you enjoy (e.g. some people prefer biking outdoors over; others prefer running indoors, etc.).

positively associated with my degree to justify its cost. Still, the crucial fact is that I do expect something to happen. Not passively, of course, but I think that almost goes without saying. Once I do complete my degree program and graduate, I expect the number of opportunities afforded me to increase rather dramatically and the law of large numbers says something positive *should* come from that.



So, I guess this begs the question: What do you expect? What do you expect out of life: what do you expect as the first step toward your dreams, what do you expect to gain from your degree and is it the same as your intimate others? Does their opinion matter?

The best part about questions like these is 1.) There really are no “right” or “wrong” answers and 2.) The answers you devise are fluid. Irrespective of how you respond to any of those questions, if you want what I suspect we all want (happiness), then you need to know what to expect in order to measure your own success – whatever that might mean to you.

Of course, I understand that completion of my degree program guarantees me absolutely nothing aside from the possibility of consideration, but that’s a huge step in the right direction. There are no illusions of grandeur (that I will admit to), but I do expect the opportunity to compete. I know that’s all I need: once I’m in the door I have no doubt I can prove that I belong.

That is my expectation.

Bill Adkins, Student Writer

By the way, if you are one of those people who keep telling themselves, “I don’t have the time, or I can’t afford a gym membership” you can still achieve your goals without a health club membership or equipment. Even a student juggling obligations between work, family, and school needs time to take care of their health (restoring energy & eliminating stress). There are plenty of activities for the great outdoors (running, biking, hiking, skiing, swimming, etc.). There are also plenty of online resources and videos for ways to workout at home or with your own body weight (plyometrics).

Once you start to refine your goals, it is important to plan out how you will achieve them. By following a plan, it will not only motivate you as you are following through, but you will also have a measurable sense of accomplishment with each goal that you achieve.

Stephen Hirschbein, Student Advisor/
Student Communications Club Facilitator

BACK TO SCHOOL WORD SEARCH

S T U T O R I N G K P V W D
 A T M D O Z X S J T B C M A
 Q A Q D I S C U S S I O N Q
 N O I T A R T S I G E R O D
 M T C E F H S M O N L I N E
 Y I O I J P R O F E S S O R
 U N U F W K R E S K N I T K
 C V R W R H K E P K J E G Z
 I G S W R S N K T A O M A K
 M J E D R Z F Z F S P O J O
 I P S T T Y C I D T E Q B J
 I Q N Z N M I D T E R M M D
 K C Q S E N I L D A E D E Y
 I R N O I T A U D A R G E S

WORD BANK

books	online
courses	paper
deadlines	professor
discussion	registration
graduation	semester
midterm	tutoring

Become a Member

Do you like to write or take pictures? Interested in journalism or marketing? Join the Student Communications Club to have your voice heard in THE VOICE. The Student Communications Club meets the 1st Tuesday of every month at 7pmET in an online classroom. Click here to become a [Member](#) or e-mail Jessica.schuckert@saintleo.edu for more information.

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is to provide a community forum as a means of communication that connects the online student body and embraces Saint Leo's core values.