



THE VOICE

Vol 27 Issue 06 2019-02-08

Do “Smart Drugs” Work?

A Growing Phenomenon in Post-Secondary

Where do you find Family?

Giving Family Day Meaning

The Only Truth is Music

Who Can Deny Truth?

Plus:

*Competing Narratives
A Measure of Success
and much more!*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



We love to hear from you!
Send your questions and comments to voicemagazine.org,
and please indicate if we may publish your letter!

Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a Facebook page?

No kidding! We also do the twitter thing once in a while if you're into that.

Editorial Competing Narratives

Karl Low



Some interesting developments on the bargaining process of the AU Faculty Association with AU have happened over the last week. First, AUFA has declared bargaining to be at an impasse, and has decided to take their proposal directly to the board of the university, something that they are allowed to do only once during the negotiations. Their contention is that the university is refusing to move on many of the issues that they feel take power away from the faculty and give it instead to the university administration. AUFA has stated that they feel by taking it directly to the Board they allow Board of Governors a chance to walk back from some of these issues without losing face, and, as importantly, ensure that the Board cannot just blame the bargaining team if negotiations do not conclude successfully.

If you want more information on the negotiating process itself, you should head over to AUSU's Facebook page, where in a [recent interview chat](#) with President Fassina and Provost Matthew Prineas, President Fassina outlines how the process works and notes that there are still a number of steps remaining before any disruptions to student learning happens, and that neither party wants things to get that far.

Then on February 7, President Fassina released an open letter or fact letter to the faculty and staff (and apparently the students, but I haven't seen it myself) outlining their positions on some of the remaining contentious bargaining positions. [AUFA quickly responded](#) noting that the President's document was missing a number of the more contentious clauses and suggesting that he had mischaracterized the effects of some of the other changes.

If this is truly the case (and, as I said, I haven't been able to find this letter, only the response, so can't verify myself) this doesn't seem to me like a winning strategy, as this document will be of intense interest to people who literally make their living doing research and applying critical thinking to what they read. Had it been a letter released to the public at large, it would have made more sense, but to send it to this specific group of people first, giving them time to review it, start asking questions, and formulate responses for if it ever does get released to convince the public seems like a management mis-step to me. Basically, if what AUFA is saying about the fact sheet is true, the people concerned will find out, and I expect it will only tend to harden positions. Nobody likes feeling like someone is trying to manipulate them.

Of course, I don't have the whole picture here. Neither AUFA nor AU has responded to my questions yet, and in the heat of bargaining, I'm not sure when they will.

In the meantime, however, this issue of *The Voice Magazine* we feature Wanda Waterman's look into the use of "smart drugs" or drugs for ADHD by post-secondary students, and whether it's really a good way to get a bit of a boost for your exams and studies. Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Does the Latest “Smart Drug” Really Make You Smarter?

Wanda Waterman



Have you ever pulled an all-night study session and in the morning couldn't remember a darn thing? Have you ever worked for days on an important paper only to find that mental fatigue had scrambled your brain cells?

Sometimes not even caffeine pills or Deathwish Coffee can get your brain through the long hours of study, research, and writing. It might have occurred to you that it would be marvelous to find a magical pill that could keep you sharp long enough to ace that exam or get an A on that paper. The temptation grows ever stronger for those who juggle studies, work, and childrearing.

A “Magic Pill”

There's been some hype in recent years about the cognitive benefits of a drug called Adderall, developed to help children with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) to focus for longer on their studies. It's made up of two forms of amphetamine: levoamphetamine and dextroamphetamine. Adderall works in much the same way as Ritalin, but its popularity among university students comes from the fact that its effects last from six to twelve hours longer.

Doctors aren't legally permitted to prescribe Adderall for cognitive enhancement because a perceived need for cognitive enhancement is not a legitimate medical condition. But a 2004 study by the University of Michigan's Substance Abuse Research Center showed that, in that year, 4.1 percent of America's undergrads had taken prescription drugs for unapproved use (i.e. to help them focus on academic work for longer periods), and some schools had rates of up to 35 percent.

A very few students fake the symptoms of ADHD in order to get prescriptions, and some students who've been taking the drug for years for real ADHD are stockpiling the drug to sell to friends. But it's also fairly easy to buy online.

The Pros

- It's not just students who are extolling the praises of Adderall; executives, software engineers, and even poker players are among those using Adderall to maintain long hours of intense focus.
- The drug is not strongly addictive; stopping it after long-term regular use won't lead to cravings.
- Even if you do obtain the drug illegally, there's no real social stigma attached to it, and many parents even approve of their children using it.
- In a world of tight competition Adderall users seem to have a definite advantage.

The Cons

- Although the drug is said not to be addictive, taking it for short-term focus will often result in a mild cognitive impairment once the drug is out of your system. If you've taken it regularly and then stopped you may experience depression, fatigue, paranoia, and possibly symptoms of schizophrenia. If you've been taking the drug for a long time, these symptoms may hang around much longer than you'd like — for months or even years.
- There's some evidence to suggest that the rosy results Adderall users report actually stem from the emotional high users experience, a positive mood that leads them to think their performance was better than it really was.

- If you're required to take drug tests, know that Adderall will appear in your blood, saliva, hair, or urine for up to three days.
- Those who use Adderall illegally are at risk to abuse stronger drugs.
- Sometimes Adderall sabotages academic performance by making students write papers that are far too wordy, or by sending their mental energy off-track into pointless activities.
- Despite the slightly misleading marketing, no "smart" drug will actually make you smarter.

You Can't Cheat Mother Nature

The effort to push the mind further than it wants to go has been around for a long time. Sir Francis Bacon tried out a number of natural substances to see if they would improve his writing ability. Balzac drank coffee like it was mother's milk, and Sartre used speed to get to the end of his difficult philosophical treatises.

They all learned, as does anyone on a quest for more smarts, that you can't cheat Mother Nature. Better to go with the practises that really do make you smarter, like good nutrition, plenty of sleep, regular exercise, and mindful attention to your studies. And if your environment demands more of you than it should, it may be time to make a few life changes. You'll thank yourself later.

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<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0306460312000615>

Wanda also writes the blog *The Mindful Bard: The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self*.

Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of *The Voice Magazine*.

Don't look now, but Valentine's Day is next week already! Here's a pair of articles from Voices past to get you in the mood.

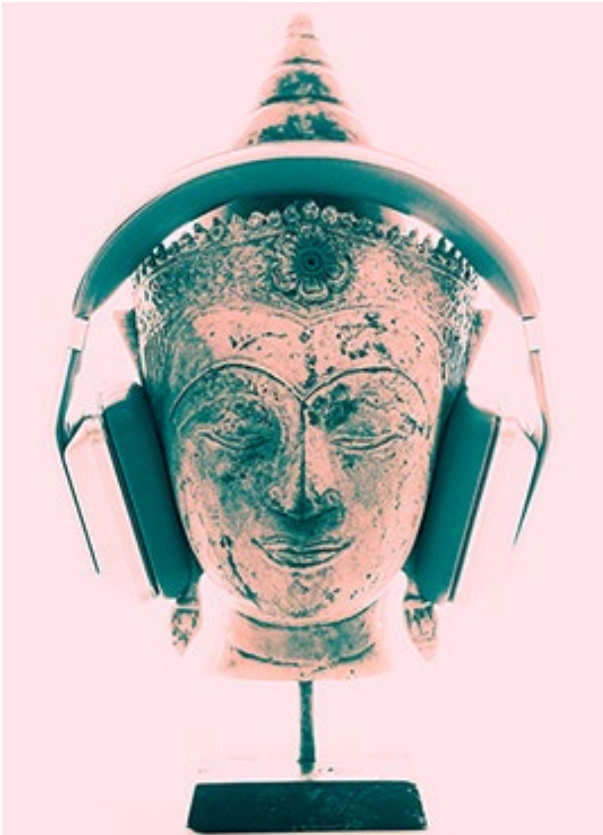
"Tis the season to snuggle. Christina M. Frey launches the first of three articles about romantic movies. "Some of the most enduring movie classics are sweeping romantic dramas exploring human love against a backdrop of war or social status." Saturday Night at the (Old) Movies—Romance in the Air, Part 1: Romantic Dramas, February 5, 2010.

Be my Sasquatch? Writer Bill Pollett begs you to be many things, but not that! "Be my Black Adder, my Mad Hatter. Be my star-kitten, my thunderbunny, my cherry-bomb." Lost and Found: Be My..., February 10, 2006



Porkpie Hat The Only Truth is Music

Darjeeling Jones



“The only truth is music.” - Jack Kerouac

It started on a Friday night, with horn and percussion instruments quite literally fashioned from ice. There was an epic arctic chill that evening, and it felt only a little short of apocalyptic, with brilliant crystals dancing on the soundwaves, and temperatures flirting with minus-fifty celsius. Despite the weather, it was a sold-out show; a surreal scene, with thick ice fog hanging over the crowd's heads, and the hollow, slightly eerie sound of applause muffled by thick mittens. There we were, all of us standing there in an atmosphere not unlike what you might expect to find on Mars, revelling in an evening of challenging, gorgeous, unsettling, and haunting contemporary music. Such is the one-week, midwinter wonder that is the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra's New Music Festival.

In retrospect, the hip flask filled with Cuervo Gold that evening might have been a miscalculation, because I spent the next morning drinking green tea with the heavy green curtains closed tight. What got me

through, though (as always), was another heaping helping of music; lounging on the couch in gentle, underwater light, listening to a mixtape of 60s jazz, 70s soul, Chicago blues, dark country, and avant garde cabaret. Note-by-note, the music recharged me.

Every evening for the rest of the week was filled with a wealth of diverse and surprising music, from sweeping, emotional symphonies to ridiculously complex, synapse-melting progressive metal. The experience got me thinking about how important music is in my life, how deeply entangled it is with all the threads and wires of my heart, my brain, and my soul. I have met many people in this world who claim that the music they listened to while growing up enriched, changed, and maybe even saved their lives. I know it's true for me. The clearest, most vivid memories of my life are those moments accompanied by a specific soundtrack: from backbeats under strobing lights to campfire songs with background vocals supplied by prairie winds and coyotes.

I don't know how some people can limit themselves to a strict musical diet of only classic rock, country, easy listening, or rap. Our world and our lives are so complex, fragmented, multi-faceted, after all. Don't varying circumstances and altering situations require very different music? Some days are disco, some days are opera, some nights are sweet Philly soul. What aspect of ourselves do we need to access? Our string quartet mind, free jazz soul, torch song intuition, or big, fat punk rock middle finger?

How about this: mixtapes as metaphor for life itself? After all, if we can't embrace a complex diversity in musical tastes, how can we hope to achieve open-mindedness in other, far more emotionally fraught areas of our lives. If we can't break down barriers in music, can we hope to

do it anywhere? The Handsome Family, Shovels and Rope, Quincy Jones, Thelonious Monk, Koko Taylor, Isaac Hayes, Sigur Ros, and A Wolf Amongst Ravens: a banquet of beauty I can't live without. I can't get through a single day, barely an hour, without my personal soundtrack. Don't understand how anyone can. Horn sections get me high, violins get me drunk. There's a saxophone blowing somewhere out there, maybe from right next door, maybe from the far side of the moon. Why not open up your windows, your ears, your heart, even your soul, and let those wavelengths come flooding in. To paraphrase a certain Englishman, music is truth, and truth is music. That's all we need to know.



Where do you Find Your Family

Tara Panrucker



Most of us winter-weary Canadians can agree on the value of having a holiday in February. The Canadian statutory Family Day is celebrated in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, and Ontario. Meanwhile, the province of Manitoba celebrates Louis Riel Day, Prince Edward Island has Islander Day, Nova Scotia and the Yukon Territory have Heritage Day, and Prince Edward Island has Islander Day. All usually occur on the third Monday in February and we are encouraged by the Canadian government and numerous news articles to spend it bonding with our families. Many communities across the country provide special free events to partake in while enjoying extra time with family members.

However, if you don't have close family ties this extra holiday will not carry much significance. Neither will it seem appealing to individuals who lack support from family members to begin with. While it may seem like most Canadians are enjoying fun family outings, winter carnivals, and outdoor gatherings together, many are simply working as usual.

On the other hand, you may have moved so far away that spending time with your first family is simply not financially or physically viable.

While I like the idea of Family Day, I tend to think that, as grown adults, we are capable of creating our own sense of community with friends. Spending extra time with friends that share mutual interests can be a great way to enjoy the much-needed holiday in February. Rather than working through it or forcing "quality time" with family members you share nothing in common with, hanging out for a few hours with people you feel connected to is comparable to going on vacation—refreshing, rejuvenating, and relaxing.

Likewise, spending quality time with yourself is a healthy way to work on your relationship with yourself. Just because you don't have family nearby does not mean you can't go buy yourself a colourful bunch of tulips, order your favourite Chinese takeout, or treat yourself to some TLC. You deserve a break with a nice hot bubble bath, a giant glass of a new dark beer, or a session working on that new work of art (that doesn't feel like work because you enjoy it so much).

Family is not limited to who you grew up with. Family is the community you build wherever you are. Unfortunately, your original family can be the people who have caused you the most damage and heartache. Sometimes, healing your wounds and searching out the people who appreciate you for exactly who you are right here, right now, is the best family of all.

Family can also be found in other places, if you look. If you're a musician or writer, join a music or writing group. Love running? Join a runner's group. Love art? Join some art classes. You may be pleasantly surprised by the warm feelings stirred within when you find the new "family" that shares your interests, struggles, and insights.

I joined a "Newcomer's Club" when I moved to a small town on Vancouver Island for a year. While many joked about the advanced age of the majority of people who made up this group, I met the kindest, most welcoming couple that helped me through a tough time. These people became like an instant family to me, and I'm eternally grateful for their compassion and friendship.

Beyond the standard February family and love holidays, there is always the option to celebrate the lunar Chinese New Year by surrounding yourself with plenty of candlelight, ambient lighting, or if all else fails, hanging out in the lighting section of Home Depot.

"Friends, there is nothing like your own family to make you appreciate strangers!" –Barbara Kingsolver

Tara Panrucker lives on Vancouver Island and is seeking a General Arts Degree at AU.



Brittany Daigle

Course Exam

ENGL 145 (Reading and Writing for Academic Purposes)

Course Exam

AU courses, up close

Brittany Daigle

ENGL 145 (Reading and Writing for Academic Purposes) is a zero-credit course that is designed for students who need to fill the gaps in their reading and writing skills in preparation for studies at the university level. It is appropriate for both ESL (English as a Second Language) students and native speakers of English who wish to upgrade their academic skills and strongly recommended for those who plan on taking or ENGL 155 (Developing Writing Skills), ENGL 177 (English for Academic Purposes), or ENGL 189 (English for Business). There are prerequisites for this course, though TOEFL 450 level or equivalent is recommended. This course is not available for challenge.

Students should be aware of the English Language Studies Assessment Test that is designed to help students understand their strengths and weaknesses in English and guide them to the most appropriate course(s).

Reading and Writing for Academic Purposes is made up of eight units consisting of twenty-four lessons, with eight assignments each weighing ten percent, and a final examination worth twenty percent. There are also online self-tests that carry no weight. Throughout this course students will learn how to write narratives, explanatory paragraphs, write persuasively, and write descriptive paragraphs. Also, students will become more familiar with reading a variety of different genres and the course teaches them to become creative thinkers for their reading and writing. To pass ENGL 145, students must complete all of the assignments and achieve a minimum grade of fifty percent on the final examination, and a composite course grade of at least sixty percent. The final examination for this course must be taken online with an Athabasca University-approved exam invigilator.

Dr. Michael Volek has been working at Athabasca University since the fall of 2013 and has been tutoring and coordinating this course since its roll out in the fall of 2018. Alongside ENGL 145, he coordinates and tutors all the foundational (100-level) writing skills courses at AU, which includes ENGL 140, ENGL 155, ENGL 177, and ENGL 189. He also tutors MAIS 606, which is a graduate-level writing course, and he coaches the Write Site. He states, “I graduated from McMaster University in 1993 with a B.A. in Philosophy before setting out for Okayama, Japan, where I worked for many years as an English instructor. In 2003, I returned to McMaster to complete an M.A. in Philosophy, followed by a second M.A. in Applied Language Studies from Carleton University and finally a Ph.D. in English from UBC, which I completed in 2014. My academic interests concern the intersection of theory and praxis in discourse studies, in particular, with the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, which was the topic of my doctoral research. But despite my focus on theory, I consider my vocation to be teaching, and I take the greatest pleasure in guiding student-writers on their academic path.”

Dr. Volek provides students a brief description of ENGL 145, stating “I like to describe the course as a “choose-your-own-adventure” story, in which the experiences and learning outcomes are determined by the individual students, who are empowered to choose whether to focus their studies on reading comprehension or foundational writing skills—or both—depending on their specific needs and priorities.”

I asked Dr. Volek to explain the structure of the course and he told me that, “Every lesson begins with a pre-test that helps students to determine their level of mastery over the material. If their understanding is sufficient, they can skip ahead to the next lesson; otherwise, they can complete the lesson and, if necessary, explore the supplementary materials before again testing their knowledge (this time with an online quiz modelled after the relevant section of the final exam), and finally moving on to the next lesson. I modelled the course after the new revisions to ENGL 155 and ENGL 177, with eight units of three lessons each: (i) “Structure and Language”, which focuses on English fundamentals; (ii) “Reading”, devoted to comprehension skills; and (iii) “Writing”, devoted to composition skills.

He continues “Student-tutor dialogue is encouraged and facilitated by the requirement for a brief “reflective journal entry” to accompany each assignment. The entry focuses on the student’s goals, activities, and experiences in the most recent unit of study.”

He concludes, “At the end of each unit, in consultation with their tutor, students select and complete one of the graded assignment options. The reading-comprehension option begins (in the early units) by posing short-answer questions about assigned readings but progresses (in the

later units) to requiring students to complete full-length summaries of their readings. The writing option focuses on paragraph-length compositions, including summaries, narratives, descriptive passages, and explanatory paragraphs.”

Dr. Volek states that “Student-writers tend to struggle with the same challenges: grammar, punctuation, argumentation, and organization. But that is what this course is designed to overcome.” Though, he encourages students to give him a call if they have any questions or concerns!

Whether English is not your first language, or if you just want to improve your English skills prior to taking other university courses, ENGL 145 will have you coming away with the tools that you need to read and write at the university-level!

Brittany Daigle is 22 years old and completing her BSc in Computing Science & Information Systems with AU from Toronto, Ontario.

A Measure of Success

Deanna Roney



I think we put a lot of pressure on ourselves to succeed. It can be blinding. But what we consider success is an important question we need to ask, and answer, for ourselves.

Often success is thought of as a salary, a title, how comfortably you live, or how well known you are. Success is very often used as a synonym for financial stability.

During my undergrad program, success was easier to measure: it was a grade, a GPA, the comments from the professor. Success was determined by the level of achievement in any given course or on any given assignment. But once I got outside of that, I realized that success in my undergrad was not determined by the grade I received—the GPA I walked away with. Success in this context could be measured by how much I truly learned, but also by how much I opened myself up to the course, and how much I allowed what I learned to change

and shape me. Whether I agreed or disagreed wasn't the point, rather, it was the critical thought.

I have found that many courses have affected the way I view everything around me. These courses have pushed me to consider statements that seem “every day” and consider their implications. What I learned from these courses gave me the strength and knowledge to take a stand. To confidently enter debates and know that I had the information to back my arguments. It means listening to what they have to say, too. I also learned that not everyone is going to change their opinion, no matter how well developed my argument might be. Success is being able to take these lessons into our lives and allow them to shift our perspective.

Success, to me, doesn't reside in the final grade (though, of course, I worked for those grades) but, in retrospect, it resides in how open I was to the experience, into learning and being changed. There were times through my undergrad where I was stressed out over where my GPA was standing. I would crunch numbers to see what grade I needed to get in my remaining courses to get that "desired" GPA. What I have found, now, is that those grades didn't really matter, that GPA hasn't affected how I find success now.

When we are in the midst of working toward something we can lose sight of what success means, we can become bogged down in the narrow definitions of what it means in that moment. I think it is important to take a step back and really consider what is going to be the measure of success looking back, rather than in that moment.

Success is movement, moving forward, and not allowing yourself to stay stagnant. Success is being open to learning new things and allowing yourself to be changed by them.

It is important to consider what success means to us, maybe it means being financially stable—regardless of the financial position. Maybe it means chasing something that seems improbable. There is no wrong answer. But this is something we must define for ourselves rather than try and fit into someone else's definition of success.

Deanna is an AU graduate who loves adventure in life and literature. Follow her writing journey at <https://deannaroney.wordpress.com/>



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

Following What's Hot around AU's Social Media Sites.



AthaU Facebook Group

New student Kat plans to do three courses on top of full-time employment; many responders offer advice on how they did it. Isabella, on the other hand, is elated to be finished her degree after a ten-year slog. Katy is planning ahead for 2021 convocation and asks for info; responders provide a link and lots more.

Other posts include myAU outage, free hockey tickets, exam services email address, and courses ASTR 205, HLST 200, PHIL 152, and POLI 309.

reddit

A less-than-satisfied student gives AU a failing grade, but not every responder agrees.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "#AthabascaU is #NowHiring an Individualized Study Tutor for FREN 422: Littérature française du 17e siècle. Responsible for providing academic support to students & marking assignments, the ideal candidate would have a Master's in French literary studies <https://bit.ly/2GmcOgZ>."

@austudentsunion tweets: "Check it out! @AthabascaU is featured in the BCBusiness Magazine! (scroll down to 2nd article - and our AUSU execs with AUSU President Fassina). <https://www.bcbusiness.ca/Educational-Discovery> ... #cdnpse #disted #innovativelearning."


The Fit Student Boost Your Energy

Marie Well



Some young adults can no longer smile, eat, laugh—or study. Mitochondria in your cells gives your body energy to do these tasks: “The main function of mitochondria is energy production. And this energy gets used for almost everything we do, which is why when your mitochondria are damaged, you have less energy to combat disease, allergies, inflammation, and stress” (Bennet, 2016, p. 14 of 212, 11%). But, “when your mitochondrial health is impaired, you may start to experience symptoms such as

- Fatigue and physical weakness
- Pain and soreness
- Memory loss and lack of motivation
- Brain fog and depression
- Mood changes and feeling overwhelmed
- Headaches and migraines
- Stiffness, tight or cramping muscles
- Prolonged healing and recovery period” (Bennet, 2016, p. 17 of 212, 12%).

 I watched a YouTube clip of a fellow in a coma-like state from chronic fatigue syndrome. His mitochondria had failed him. Damaged mitochondria can lead to autoimmune diseases: “We are coming to discover how when something goes wrong in the mitochondria, they may turn this process of apoptosis [cell death] against healthy cells in the body, leading to a whole number of autoimmune diseases” (Bennet, 2016, p. 13 of 212, 10%).

Like the fellow in the coma state, I too came down with (undiagnosed) chronic fatigue syndrome. On sick days, I couldn't read a page in a book due to lack of energy. Instead, I felt nausea and extreme tiredness, which began stretching entire weeks instead of merely half. The only relief came when I munched garden grown kale or took ice cold showers. "When we expose ourselves to hazardous foods, polluted water, UV rays, drugs or toxic chemicals, or when we don't take care of our body's physical needs ... instead of providing the oxygen and nutrients that our mitochondria need, we starve them" (Bennet, 2016, 2019, p. 15 of 212, 11%).

I aim to claim healthier mitochondria. You should, too. Athletes; performance-conscious people; people with low energy; sufferers of chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia, or many other diseases—all gain from stronger mitochondria. After all, do you want to wind up pumping iron at age ninety or bedbound at age forty? Well, to be at peak health, you need to achieve the “3 P’s for optimal mitochondria health ... [1] prevent mitochondrial impairment, [2] purge damaged mitochondria, [3] protect and produce healthy, new mitochondria. This way, you’ll have the most and healthiest mitochondria in your body possible, firing on all cylinders, making more energy for your body” (Bennet, 2016, location 135 of 3181, 4%).

To strengthen mitochondria, try exercising, supplementing, eating a healthy diet, and detoxing.

As for exercise, start small. Walk a block a day, and gradually, over a two-year period, work up to seven-hour workouts a week at an athlete's level. That's what happened to me over a year-

and-eight-month time frame. My undiagnosed chronic fatigue syndrome disappeared. And even today, I notice new achievements I couldn't do the month before.

But if your health prevents you from walking a block, then do as Dr. Susanne Bennett says, "You could even walk for 1 minute and then rest for 3 minutes if that is the conditioning you are at" (2016, p. 64 of 212, 30%). Later adding weights to build muscle can multiply your mitochondria: "Part of what we're doing when we exercise is simply building better mitochondria. We're packing our body with them, since they're highly concentrated in muscle" (Bennet, 2016, p. 25 of 212, 16%).

But Dr. Bennett suggests you bypass working up to an athlete's workout: "I recommend you train only two to three times of interval training a week; put it simply, you must give the body the rest it needs to purge the damaged mitochondria ..." (Bennet, 2016, p. 67 of 212, 31%). Rest makes for better fitness, true. I get two days rest a week. But I believe we can push ourselves once we get healthier: longer workouts and harder workouts. And I know firsthand that higher intensity workouts lead to greater health benefits.

For instance, a year and eight months ago, I couldn't tolerate supplements. I couldn't meditate without getting sick. I could barely withstand super-hot steam baths. And I couldn't sleep more than ten hours without needing an extra thirty-hour nap. But today, I can do all those things without ill health.

I'm now ready to introduce supplements into my diet to increase my mitochondrial strength. You should do so, too, if you want more energy. Supplements to take include: "Carnitine, CoQ10, creatine, D-ribose, magnesium malate, NADH, SAM-e, vitamin B12" (Dellwo, January 17, 2019).

Strong mitochondria also need antioxidants to fight off free radicals, according to Dr. Bennett. The best sources of antioxidants come from "goji berries ... wild blueberries ... dark chocolate ... pecans ... artichoke (boiled) ... elderberries ... kidney beans ... cranberries ... blackberries ... cilantro" (Axe, May 7, 2018). You can buy goji berries in the nuts and dried fruits aisles of most Asian supermarkets.

For detox, don't use Crest, Colgate, Lubriderm—or any other toxic cream or paste. Lubriderm's alcohols and acid don't belong on the skin, do they? After all, what goes on the body, goes in the body, becomes the body. (I believe that saying came from the famous Dr. Amen.) Instead, I suggest you buy *organic extra virgin* coconut oil. The "organic extra virgin" version tastes like coconut pie and feels smooth on the skin. I use organic extra virgin coconut oil for skin cream, massage oil, and deep hair conditioning. I also use a mixture of the organic extra virgin coconut oil with baking soda for toothpaste and deodorant. As for other detox strategies, buy a (non-electric) foot bath for magnesium-rich Epsom salt soaks and use a body brush. And sign up at gyms to get fit and then sit in their steam baths.

Now, you'll have the energy to dance like the stars and study like an Einstein. Best of all, you won't wind up bedbound in your thirties, unable to smile, eat, laugh—or study.

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Four Ways to Have Less Salt and More Health

Xin Xu



The association between increased salt in our diet and cardiovascular problems like high blood pressure is well-documented in literature (He, 2013). Yet, with processed and intensely flavorful foods being a highlight in many people's diet, is it possible to move away from it?

Salt is an addicting flavor enhancer. As we use more in our diet, the less sensitive our body is to its effects. We crave ever increasing sprinkles of salt because our taste buds are no longer accustomed to low sodium. I have experienced this, myself. Since living independently, I have resorted to the convenience of eating out frequently or cooking less healthy meals in exchange for time. But the trade-off is that, sometimes when I taste my family's cooking, I complain about the bland, tasteless protein on the table when in reality it was my own

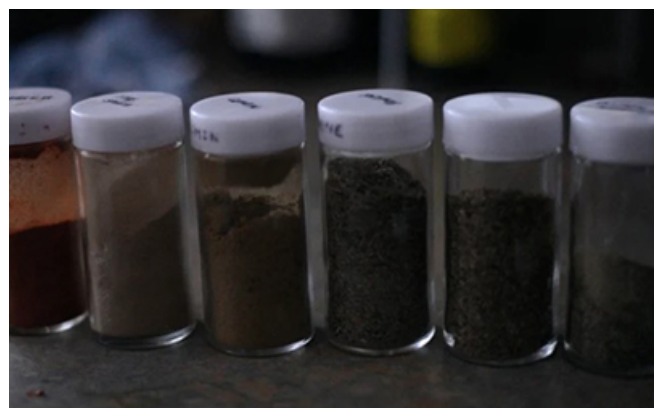
sodium-infused dinners that have caused this contrast. It's so challenging to get away from sodium because we find it everywhere, from delicious snacks in the grocery aisles to the seemingly innocent soups and salads at restaurants. The other day, a glimpse of the nutrition facts from a Tim Hortons' blueberry muffin told me that 700 mg of sodium was found in a single muffin. So a food that isn't branded as savory is, in fact, a salt-soaked sponge.

So what can we do about it?

1. **Gradually reduce salt intake.** I often fall prey to eliminating an ingredient from my diet when I learn about its detrimental effects (or become more salient of its health impacts), but it's not realistic nor sustainable to go from eating out to suddenly cooking every single meal. Instead, gradually dial down the salt intake. This could mean adding 1 teaspoon instead of 2 teaspoons in a baking recipe or looking at the nutrition facts to understand what percent of your daily recommended amount of salt a serving size takes. Tapering down can help because your body is less prone to sensing small changes compared to dramatic ones.

2. **Use spices instead of salt.** Just because your salt intake is reduced does not mean you can't have flavorful food. Replace the normal teaspoon of salt you use with fresh herbs like basil, parsley, and oregano. Bulk buy some dried spices so you won't have to rely on salt to amuse your taste buds.

3. **Eat out less.** Since about a year ago, when I embarked on a low-carbohydrate diet involving a significant boost to my fresh food intake, I have very rarely sat down at a restaurant. The enticing flavors of restaurant meals are accompanied by a huge spike in your salt intake. Reserve eating out with friends, clients, or special occasions rather than the norm and your body will thank you for it.



4. Read the nutrition fact label. Looking at the percent of daily value from each serving can help you derive the health value of a food item. For example, 15% of calcium means that 1 serving size of the food item provides 15% of the calcium you need in a day. A general guideline is to look for foods 15% or higher in fibre, vitamins, and minerals and 5% or lower in carbohydrates and sodium.



Which soup is healthier?

Answer: the left soup has 25% daily value for sodium, the right soup has only 13% daily value for sodium

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Xin Xu is a post-graduate health-science AU student, aspiring clinician, globe-trotter, parrot-breeder and tea-connoisseur



Fly on the Wall It's Your Year (If You're a Pig)

Jason Sullivan

Chinese New Year and the Existential Cycle

As the year of the pig commences, the Fly on the Wall separates the slop from the mire in competing cosmologies. Is time a cycle or a line?

Chinese astrology experts caution that anyone whose birth date is in the year of the Pig ought to be wary:

"They should avoid conflicts and be prepared for some emotional roller-coastering. It's also not the best year for them to hit the casinos or switch careers" (Birkenbuel, online).



Before we put ourselves in a life choices straitjacket, or brush these pronouncements off as silly superstitions, we might recall our experience of the humble fortune cookie. The commentaries contained within those crunchy shells are designed to make us better people if we heed them. Likewise, we might recall how common sense and social belief varies in every culture; there are things we all just do (and things we all just believe) because they seem natural and inevitable while, in fact, they are social creations. Switching careers and hitting the casino might not be the same thing (although the financial risks entailed certainly aren't from different galaxies) we'd be wise to reflect before engaging in either.

We each receive culturally-specific answers to the mysteries of life.

In our age of science, an argument based on recurring astronomic realities, such as the lunar cycles that make up Chinese astrology, may not seem persuasive, but let's not forget that the horoscope industry is alive and well here in Canada. I've even known people who planned their children to be born in the same month but nevertheless referred to the astrological sign of their offspring!

The efficacy of a belief system is in whether it helps accomplish a task; the proof is in the pudding. Before people knew that yeast is what allowed a bread pudding to rise after a period of proofing, they knew that something in the ingredients allowed for the desired result. The phrase worked because people believed it would and followed its instruction. Likewise, carpenters or engineers utilize the appropriate math equations because they believe in them enough to make them work. To bother to apply one method is to believe in its efficacy and these allow us to achieve and affirm the good things in life.

Being sceptical that predictions are true because they're based on maps of the past is another matter entirely, however. It's time to tackle the greased pig of cosmic epistemologies themselves: how do we know what we think we know about the nature of recurring events in the universe?

Some things in nature certainly repeat: the rhythms of the seasons, the flow of the tides and the passing of lunar phases. Even our own heartbeats happen over and over again in about the same way each time, and when these are disrupted there can be serious health consequences. Discovery of patterns of repetition leads to a fundamental tenet of science in our epoch: the *capacity for predication*.

Milic Capek states that there are here two possible approaches to patterns. The first is "that every event in the universe, in all its details and in its whole cosmic context, will recur an infinite number of times in exactly the same way that it has already occurred" (Capek, 61). This is distinguished from the scientific perspective that although patterns may appear they are mere waves of chance congealing when the causative winds are right. To the modern mind patterns are not the exact return of events in their exact same form, no matter how identical they may appear at the level of their being (their ontology). For instance, no two weddings are alike although the trappings may be eerily familiar. Likewise, weather data here in the South Okanagan is reliable for no more than a hundred years depending on the settlement of each town or hamlet. Nevertheless, this allows for meteorological prognostication: the same day never quite repeats twice, though. The weather is either warmer or colder than the seasonal average on a given day. Yet, at the broader level of deep time inhabited by stars in outer space and their zodiac correlates here on human earth, prediction becomes more dicey.

Capek notes that "periodicity" implied in basic life events like the alternation of day and night is of a different kind than, for instance, that inhabited by Bill Murray in the movie *Groundhog Day*. If the same events literally repeated every day we'd probably go nuts or, as in the Jim Carey movie *The Truman Show*, suspect a conspiracy. By modern thinking, the fact that a calendar day comes

up once a year (or every four years if it's February 29th) is simply a functional exigency rather than a literal fact. But this assumption has by no means dominated human history.

It remains philosophically prescient to consider the place of cycles as we reflect on the political ebbs and flows over the decades our lifetime, the metres of snow we've shovelled each winter as precipitation varies, or the amount of procrastination it takes to finally write that term paper. A key question from these very human considerations isn't just how can we predict the future from the past but does the future repeat itself out of what's passed.

George Santayana famously claimed that "those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it" so with that thematic in mind we can assess this debate between time as an arrow and time as a circle (Santayana, online). On the other hand, there's a certain romantic wistfulness in imagining that, somehow, somewhere, someday "I shall converse with you staff in hand, and you will sit as you are sitting now, and so it will be in everything else, and it is reasonable to assume that time too will be the same" (Eudemus of Rhodes by Diels and Kranz, in Capek, 61).

As moderns inhabiting a Newtonian worldview where we believe that an apple falls because gravity sucks (as compared to an Aristotelian worldview where an apple falls because its destiny is to be on terra firma to spread its seed) it's easy to ignore the fact that for much of human history cycles were seen as all there was. Newton, however, saw "time as absolute, as intrinsically irreversible, irrespective of its content" (Capek, 62). We return to the past only in poems and dreams, Newton would have claimed. Interestingly, he'd have said this regardless of the legend that he was taking a daydreaming repose under a tree when he realized his seminal Law of Gravity.

Meanwhile, the Pythagoreans, creators of maths both useful and stupefying, held that there was a precise "length of this cosmic cycle, called the Great Year or Perfect Number" (Capek, 60). By the year 1277 profession of belief in this Neo-Platonic idea of a "Great Year" could lead to excommunication from the Roman Catholic church (Capek, 61). Studious study led to the discovery of certain geometric rhythms that appeared in sequence as though they'd been stencilled into place. Orderly appearances, such as the Fibonacci shape of

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

MBA Info Session - Thunder Bay

Mon, Feb 11, 12:00 to 1:30 pm EST
TownePlace Suites by Marriott, 550
Harbour Expressway, Thunder Bay ON

In person

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabascau.ca/event-details/mba-information-session-thunder-bay/

Register online at above link

MBA Info Session - Sudbury

Tues, Feb 12, 12:00 to 1:30 pm EST
Radisson Hotel Sudbury, 85 Ste Anne Rd,
Sudbury ON

In person

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabascau.ca/event-details/mba-information-session-sudbury/

Register online at above link

MBA Info Session - Ottawa

Wed, Feb 13, 12:00 to 1:30 pm EST
ARC The Hotel, 140 Slater St, Ottawa ON

In person

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabascau.ca/event-details/mba-information-session-ottawa/

Register online at above link

Academic Integrity Webinar

Wed, Feb 13, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MST
Online

Hosted by AU Library
library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html

No pre-registration necessary

All events are free unless otherwise specified

sunflower seeds in their sunny beds, led the Pythagoreans to join a noble battalion of philosophers throughout history who saw repeated patterns of recurrence and recollection as essential to the nature of the universe.

Plotinus had believed that the *"intelligible world contains the ideal patterns not only of genera but also of individuals, each of which successively finds its embodiment in the realm of change. But since the supply of these patterns is finite, a time will come when the same pattern—for example, of Socrates—will have to be incarnated again"* (Capek, 61).

In this sense, if this is your year, then you contain The Pig within you. Likewise, if you're a psychology major then you have more in common with your fellow psych students across the planet than merely sharing access to the same digital readings database; possibly, you are literally cut from the same cosmic cloth as psychologists both future and past.

At the broader level, if the universe is finite then the well of moments and possibilities, not to mention individuals—including yourself—must run dry and be replenished with all that is possible; namely, *more of the same*. On the other hand, if the universe is infinite or infinitely repeatable then the same outcome is true: *an infinite number of possibilities could not preclude the possibility of repetition*. If nothing repeated then infinity itself would have limits; as anyone feeling like they're just a number (the ultimate repeatable unit) in a brick and mortar institution can attest, there's nothing more possible than sameness happening over and over. Maybe when we feel alienated and reduced to a common denominator that's because part of our essence really is duplicated in others!

Infinity being like a hall of mirrors reflecting off into forever suggests that an infinite universe would, by necessity, contain repetition of events and people. An infinite universe, characterized by an ongoing filling of interminable endlessness, would fill spaces of possibility in every direction including at first a little, and then with endless vigour, of doubling back on its tracks. Déjà vu suddenly seems very real, but also very useful; this is why we owe it to our profs to

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

MBA Info Session - Toronto

Thurs, Feb 14, 12:00 to 1:30 pm EST
The University Club of Toronto, 380
University Ave, Toronto ON
In person
Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabascau.ca/event-details/mba-information-session-toronto/
Register online at above link

Love Under the Northern Lights

Thurs, Feb 14, 7:00 to 8:30 pm MST
AU Governing Council Chambers, 1
University Dr, Athabasca AB
In person
Hosted by AU and Science Outreach
Athabasca
scienceoutreach.ab.ca/events/documents/LoveUnderNorthernLightsMartinConnorsFebruary142019version2.pdf
No pre-registration necessary; dress for the weather!

Create a Winning 3MT

Fri, Feb 15, 2:00 to 3:00 pm MST
Online
Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies
www.eventbrite.ca/e/creating-a-winning-3mt-presentation-tickets-54939846560
Register online at above link

Looking ahead...

Student Town Hall

Tues, Feb 19, 11:30 am to 2:00 pm MST
Peace Hills Trust Building, Room 1222,
10010 - 109 St NW, Edmonton AB
In person and Online
Hosted by AU
news.athabascau.ca/events/student-town-hall-edmonton/
Click above link to register for in-person or connect online

All events are free unless otherwise specified

fill out the course evaluations so they can learn and grow too as their course repeats.

Rational reasons having weighed in favour of repetition in the minds of many philosophers in the Western tradition, some came to question the origins of the universe as a whole. *When was the proverbial first Year of the Pig* and how did it get that way? Capek summarizes several approaches to the question of timeless recurrence. Pierre-Simone Laplace raised the possibility of a “primordial nebula” from which would spin an “unending cycle of successive worlds” followed by a necessary “rewinding of the cosmic clock” (Capek, 62). A little over a century ago, Friedrich Nietzsche concluded that, because cause and effects were locked in, determined by the nature of each interaction, everything in the universe was ordained beforehand. This clockwork of inevitable outcomes would “generate the series of the same event in the same order as in the previous cosmic cycles” (Capek, 62). From here Nietzsche arrived at his infamous law of *eternal recurrence* where, in order to retain sanity and attain serenity, we must believe that each event in our life was as inevitable as the stars we were born under. From here we can accept our fate knowing that everything happens for a reason, the reason of inevitability.

In a sober judgement of this seemingly-cleareyed approach, Capek reminds us that “Nietzsche's mystical ecstasy over 'the ring of eternity' was tinged by a note of anxiety and even despair” (Capek, 62). Likewise, in ancient Greece Origen professed that “successive cosmic cycles” were “incompatible with human freedom” (Capek, 61). In our liberal-pluralist times it does seem stiflingly uncomfortable to think of our personal lives as mere repetitions of past existences. We want to do and be something new and do it for ourselves. No matter how much we revere our elders to merely walk in their shoes would feel a bit self-defeating.

Whether we see our life as cycling seasons with many of the same elements occurring over and over, or as an arousal of progress with only an occasional glance backward to recall aspects of our history arising in our present, our AU experience certainly can feel like a bit of both.

We've come a long way, every one of us, and our success as adult students is nothing to scoff at because our circumstances and challenges are each unique. Our life-long learning has caught us in an almost inexorable grip to which we have, hopefully with joy, acquiesced. Sure there are economic benefits to our distance education journey in purely practical terms, but the fact that we've arrived at our destiny by hard work rather than happenstance is a reminder to take stock and, whether the year of The Pig is ours or not (or whether we believe in such conceptions), we can be aware that if we have a level head we will continue to have success and even good fortune.

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Jason Hazel-rah Sullivan is a Masters of Integrated Studies student who loves engaging in discourse while working in the sunny orchards and forests of the Okanagan.



The Study Dude Stay Cool Under Pressure

Marie Well



As students, we can learn to stay cool under pressure. And no-one teaches how to cope with pressure better than job seekers.

I had a job interview with an accounting firm a year ago. The employer phoned me the next day, offering a low paying job. I declined, so he hung up in a huff. He had a type A personality. And I didn't like him. To my surprise, two days ago, he called me again, inviting me for another interview.

That night, I felt so stressed I prayed for a sign. The next morning, I found in my inbox the book title: *Performing Under Pressure: The Science of Doing Your Best When It Matters Most*. Well, maybe I could withstand abuse if I toughened up, I thought. Then I remembered a contact I had at an old job. She told me her boss often screamed at her. I asked her why she didn't quit. She went silent. But now I willingly headed down a similar path.

The next morning, I went into the type A's office to find the old receptionist gone. New faces, all female, walked the corridor. The boss pulled me into the interview room, barked at me, and grinned when my voice shook. He hires women only, I thought, out of fear that men might throttle him. Yet, he didn't hire me. Authors Hendrie Weisinger and J. P. Pawliw-Fry say, when facing pressure, "Finally, I took a step back and looked at the broader picture and realized that there were only three people—myself, my wife, and God—that I needed to care about being judged by" (p. 109 of 302, 35%). But we love to win, don't we? So, how can we win under pressure?

Speaking about pressure: the Calgary unemployment rate hit "7.9 per cent in December, up from 7.5 per cent in December 2017, according to Statistics Canada" (Stephenson, January 4, 2019). In other words, when I have job interviews, I compete with at least one hundred other applicants, according to two employers. I could deceive myself into believing that "this is one of many opportunities" (Weisinger & Pawliw-Fry, p. 114 of 302, 37%). After all, authors Hendrie Weisinger and J. P. Pawliw-Fry say, "Consider the number of people who needed multiple opportunities to succeed: Oprah Winfrey was fired from her first job as a news anchor in Baltimore. Steven Spielberg was turned down by the University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts several times. J. K. Rowling was turned down by thirty publishers who told her that her book about a young wizard was unsaleable" (p. 114 of 302, 37%).

Still, I have an interview tomorrow—and my portfolio lacks luster. Yet, I aim to stay upbeat, not sink in despair. So, I'll try to "befriend the moment Think of pressure moments as a challenge or opportunity/fun" (Weisinger & Pawliw-Fry, p. 110 of 302, 36%).

At a past job, the thought of making mistakes sparked panic, not fun. I saw every error as a ticket to job loss. And my fear showed: "Seeing pressure as a threat undermines our self-confidence;

elicits fear of failure; impairs your short-term memory, attention, and judgment; and spurs impulsive behavior” (Weisinger & Pawliw-Fry, p. 111 of 302, 36%).

Also, I’d fret that my boss would fire me if he knew about my panic attacks. That thought created even more panic. And then I’d worry I’d wind up homeless: “Overexaggerating is apt to stimulate primal pressure and push you toward choking and panic” (Weisinger & Pawliw-Fry, p. 116 of 302, 38%).

So, how do you best perform under pressure? Well, “shrink the importance of the pressure moment” (Weisinger & Pawliw-Fry, p. 115 of 302, 38%). And remember, “positive arousal translates into enthusiasm, a powerful emotion in overcoming anxiety and fear. Think of the high-pressure situations you’ve been in, and the times you’ve performed well” (Weisinger & Pawliw-Fry, p. 112 of 302, 37%). And, lastly, don’t despair over the pressure, but thrive on the opportunity to prove yourself; treat your pressure moment as challenges to better yourself (Weisinger & Pawliw-Fry, 2015).

Both job seekers and students achieve peak performance, not while fretting failure, but when pumped by a challenge. After all, a change of government in Alberta could mean I don’t feel like I’m kidding myself when I say, “This is one of many opportunities.”

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Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: UCT Heaston Scholarship

Sponsored by: The Order of the United Commercial Travelers of America (UCT)

Deadline: March 15, 2019

Potential payout: \$3000 to \$6000 per year for four years

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be high-school seniors (or equivalent) and be enrolled in a college or university program for the coming academic year. See [full eligibility requirements](#).

What's required: A completed application form, along with a personal narrative outlining overcoming obstacles to reach your goals, three letters of recommendations, official high school transcript(s), and a college/university acceptance letter.

Tips: Don't dally: applications must be sent by regular postal mail, and must be received (not just postmarked) by the application deadline.

Where to get info: www.uct.org/uct-in-action/scholarship-programs/





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Assistance for Assisted Living

Dear Barb:

I am the oldest in a family of three girls. We have always gotten along well and been really close. Our father passed away five years ago, and our mom stayed in the family home. She has been able to manage well until recently. She had a slip in the bathroom and injured her leg, and now she is not able to get around very well. We have had personal support workers coming in when me or my sisters can't help. It seems to have worked out well, but in the last few she is becoming short tempered with the PSW and doesn't want them coming into the house anymore. She only wants me or my sisters to care for her. We discussed bringing her into one of our homes, but since we all work full time and have kids, we thought that it wouldn't be the best option for mom. All three of us feel mom needs to go into assisted living. Unfortunately, she does not want to do that and is making this decision very difficult for us. She has heard horror stories about people being abused or even killed in nursing homes. Like that nurse, Elizabeth Wettlaufer, who killed eight elderly patients in Southwestern Ontario. We are trying to calm her fears, convince her this doesn't happen all the time, and that it was a one-time thing, but it is not working. My mom has enough money to be able to move into a good quality nursing home. Do you have any suggestions that would help us make mom more accepting of this decision? Thanks, Cindy.

Hi Cindy:

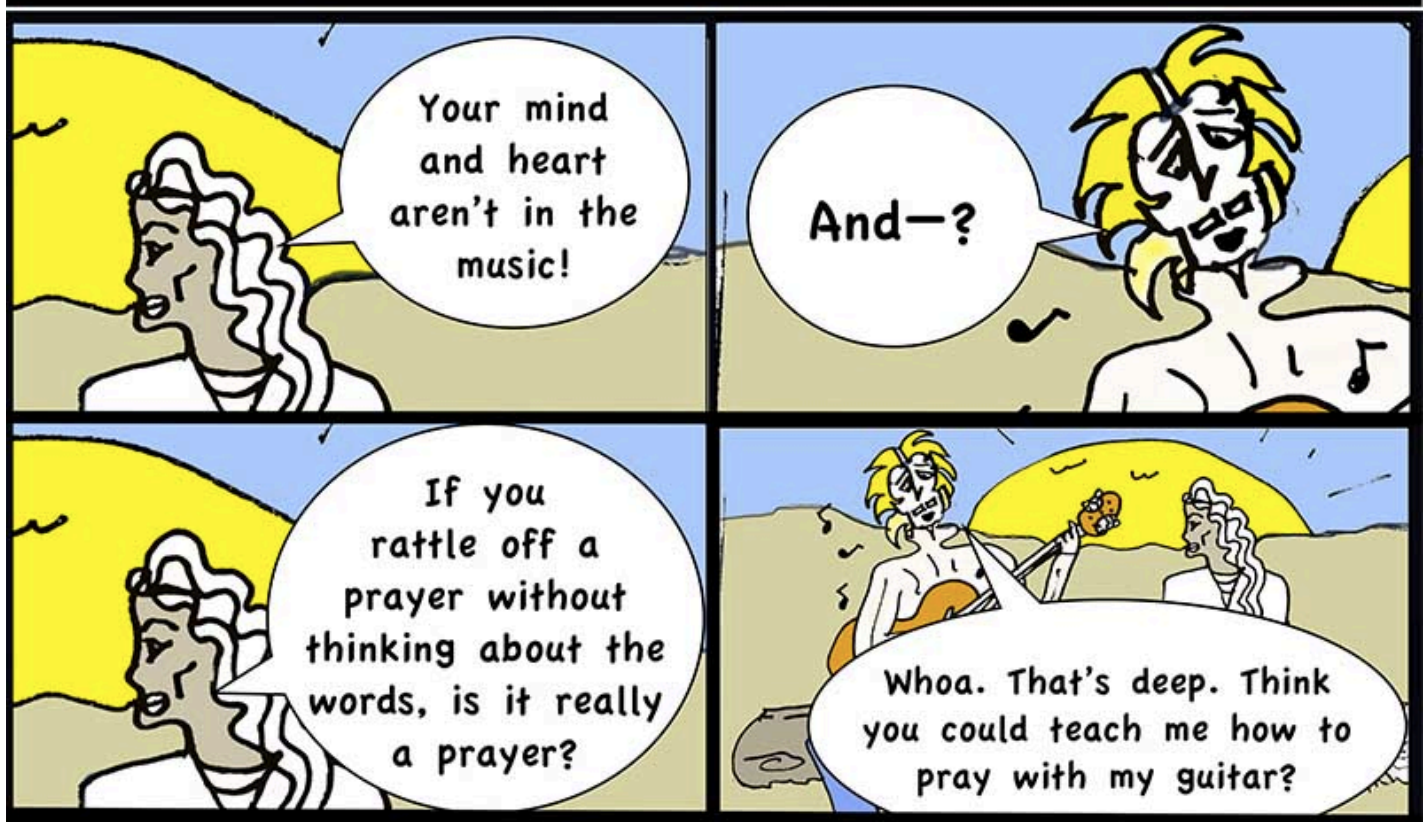
You are in a difficult situation that many adult children may one day find themselves. As we age, for many of us, health issues will cause us to need extra help, or to be moved into assisted living. Most people want to stay in their own home, where they are comfortable and familiar with their surroundings. Unless there is a major issue, the goal should be to keep aging parents in their home. Because of finances this may not be possible, however if a parent is in a home that is paid for, it is possible to obtain a reverse mortgage to free up funds to pay for nursing care. The cost of having a personal support worker come into the home is usually far less than an assisted living facility; of course this depends on how much care is required. You are saying that you and your sisters feel your mom needs to go into assisted living, but she clearly does not want to do this. If your mom wants to stay in her home, she has to be willing to accept help. My suggestion would be to get your mother assessed to see what level of care that she needs and see if there are any cognitive defects. Your family physician can arrange for a social worker to contact you. A social worker will be able to arrange for testing to assess what your mother's needs are, and whether it is possible to keep her living in her own home. You can find additional information about cognitive changes at the following website: <https://www.alz.org/ca/dementia-alzheimers-canada.asp> Good luck Cindy and thanks for writing.

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.



Poet Maeve
Playing by Rote

Wanda Waterman





AUSU
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IMPORTANT DATES

- **Feb 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Mar 1](#)
- **Feb 13:** [AU Academic Integrity Webinar](#)
- **Feb 15:** [March degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Feb 19:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Feb 28:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Apr](#)
- **Mar 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Apr 1](#)
- **Mar 14:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)

AUSU Student Advocacy

Did you know that advocacy is one of the most vital roles of a students' union?

Advocacy is vital in order to ensure transparency and accountability on behalf of the institution and the government, and advocate for affordable, accessible, quality post-secondary education for students. AUSU advocates for AU students in a variety of ways:

Individual Advocacy – Your academic concerns are important to us! Contact AUSU if you have concerns about AU services or procedures that you feel are detrimental to your student experience.

University Advocacy – AUSU advocates for all AU students at the University level, including holding seats on over 20 AU committees and the AU Board of Governors, and regularly meets with various AU VP's, Deans, and Directors to discuss issues important to AU undergraduate students.

External Advocacy – AUSU advocates for all AU students at the provincial and national levels for topics such as increased educational funding, equitable student loans programs, scholarships and bursaries, and other student issues. AUSU is also a member of the Canadian Alliance of Students' Associations ([CASA](#)) which helps AU students have a voice with the federal government.

To find out more about AUSU's advocacy efforts, visit our website [here](#).

**Student
Advocacy**



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