



# THE VOICE

Vol 27 Issue 19 2019-05-10

## Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

## Smooth Sailing to Convocation

The Logistics of Getting to AU

## How Does it Feel To be a Learner?

A Reflection on Being a Student

*Plus:*

*Five Fibs from the Book of Job  
Kaleidoscope  
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](http://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 Freelancing Mother's Day

Karl Low



We almost completely whiffed Mother's Day this year. As I'm looking through the magazine, it suddenly struck me that we had plenty of easy opportunities to tie this week's issue to Mother's Day (which is on Sunday, in case you'd forgotten. You're welcome). We could have done a feature interview with a student who's a mother, like we did last week. We could have had a Women of Interest column that looked at a remarkable woman who was also known as a mother.

The Fly on the Wall could have been one examining the parallels between fostering your own knowledge and child-rearing, because there's so many AU students who are doing both. Our course exam could have been on one of the child psychology courses at AU, there are just a wealth of opportunities we could have taken advantage of.

But we didn't. (Although the Vintage Voice has a couple of past articles that do.)

Such is the peril of running a magazine comprised almost entirely of freelance content. I publish what's on the mind of the AU students and community, and, at least this year, it seems, Mother's day wasn't up there. I don't think this is something limited to just AU students, however. It seems to

me that, lately, the entire notion of days to celebrate specific classes of people aren't as relevant as they once were. Whether that's from over-saturation as card companies continue to seek ways to remain relevant in the days of instant electronic communication, or because, as a society, we're being increasingly made aware that people are individuals. Even as our political lines harden, or perhaps because of how they're hardening, we are forced to acknowledge that certain people in that "other" group are not the same as all the rest.

Instead, what we do have is our feature interview in Minds We Meet with an amazing student who is making the time to take courses while keeping us safe, we have a look at a Woman of Interest who is one of the drivers behind why a degree in nursing exists, and we have the first of I'm sure will be a number of articles on convocation—because June is fast approaching, and one thing I know is on students' mind is the idea of graduation.

This week, Barbara Lehtiniemi gives some tips for if you're in the planning stages of going to Athabasca for your convocation. This is experience talking, so well worth the read. We also have an initial entry from a Masters of Nursing student, who has taken the time to reflect on just what it means to be a learner, both in general, and at AU in specific. She points out why, perhaps once in a while, we should stop just being a student, and actually look at what that means.

If there is a theme in this issue, now that I think of it, it does seem to be one of a search for individual meaning, whether that's why we search, the tools we use, the lies that hinder, or other factors. You'll find all of that, plus reviews, news, events, scholarships and more in this issue of The Voice Magazine.

So, have a happy mother's day, and enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Karl", with a stylized flourish at the end.



# MINDS

# WE

# MEET



*Mariah Zinnash is an airport screening officer pursuing her BPA in Communications Studies while living in Calgary, Alberta. She was kind enough to give us a little time out of her extremely busy schedule to answer some questions for the Minds we Meet column.*

**Can you give us a little bit of background information about yourself? Where are you from? What program are you in?**

I am a part-time student and full-time airport screening officer. I live in Calgary, Alberta; however, I am originally from Olds, Alberta. I have lived all across the country, mostly for school. I am a third year Communications Studies BPA Student. This is my first year attending Athabasca University, the first two years of schooling were through Lethbridge College.

**Describe the path that led you to Athabasca University. What made you realize that you wanted to go back to school?**

I was watching YouTube and realized that the kids doing school were having fun doing it. I had wanted to continue since 2010 with AU to accomplish the PLAR (prior learning assessment and recognition) program. I had initially considered working in Television instead of doing school. After having

researched it, it became financially possible to begin classes again while preparing for the PLAR program.

**How do find your learning experience at AU in comparison to studying at Lethbridge College?**

I love AU being online. Lethbridge College was a great introduction to various programs, but AU allows for focused and specialized work. For those chasing degrees, this path is great for the self-starters in the class. If you must be around people to create your ideal learning environment, then online isn't for you. If you want to try something different where exploration of a topic is possible, then you will want AU. I always valued learning the "Why's" of any technique or theory. Still do. In-person, post-secondary class time never let me explore this to my desired interests. I would always be the kid that wanted more info to paint the whole picture. This still drives my co-workers nuts.

**What do you do like to do when you are not studying?**

I sew and tailor a lot of clothing for myself, and others. I also enjoy sewing swimwear for fitness and weightlifting competitions.

**What are your plans for this education once you finish?**

I plan to apply for more jobs surrounding security at the federal level. This course fits well with my overall goal of getting a Sociolinguistics Masters, minoring in Slavic language. Athabasca University fits my lifestyle and accommodates my work lifestyle well.

**Who in your life had the greatest influence on your desire to learn?**

I had a mentor at LE instructor at Rigaud College who inspired me to try out for things like the Canada Army Run in Ottawa and she inspired me to further my education in all aspects, even linguistics.

**Describe your experience with online learning so far. What do you like?**

I love online learning. I was homeschooled for grades one and two, and then cyberschooled nine through twelve. After my two-year Diploma education, I began online learning through Lethbridge College in their Criminal Justice Studies program. I am planning to write a book about what it takes to be homeschooled for everyone, regardless if they are planning on attending college or University.

Athabasca University honoured my transfer credits and the credit transferring system works great. Another thing about AU that I love is that once I am done my degree, I can easily work towards my graduate's degree. Then, eventually, I will be able to transfer into Carleton University in Ottawa, to work towards the Sociolinguistics program and Slavic studies that they provide there.

I also love that I can do this course night or day, around my evening work schedule. It also has been beneficial for me working with the international community that I work with during my ten-hour shifts at the airport.

**What do you dislike?**

I dislike that I have not yet been to the AU campus. I want to go to the campus at least once to say that I was there, and bookstores at Colleges are my favourite!

**Do you think you were at an advantage at AU because you understood the environment already?**

I feel like I definitely had a strong advantage coming into the environment. I already knew about how to maximize workflow and I found myself flying through the lesson content, as I know where the lesson elements are located. Also, I knew how to message teachers while still moving along with the content when stuck on a theory. I look forward to taking more classes and cannot wait to begin my graduate's degree.

**At what point did you waver the most about continuing your schooling? What caused it and what got you through it?**

I wavered after completing my first AU course. I was trying to figure out how to afford it and at the time, I was planning a move. I decided to scrimp and save even more in order to ensure my education was not affected. I was already working full-time, ten-hour shifts at a physical job, which tired me out. Also, I was training for the Ottawa ten-kilometer run (76-93-minute-long running sessions), which meant that I did not have a lot of time to pick up extra shifts to pay for my education. But, I did it!

**What is your most memorable AU course so far, and why?**

Loved CRJS 350 (Community Policing), which discussed how policing can be creative and more relevant to a population.

**What have you given up to go to AU that you regret the most? Was it worth it?**

As I intend to fit my education around my ten-hour work days, I regret not having more time in my day to put towards my studies, as I know that I could complete courses faster that way.

**How do you find communications with your course tutors?**

Communication with my course tutors are good and they are usually prompt. I have found that the turn around time for tests and essays for marks has been faster than expected. Wonderful!

**What's your pet peeve if you have one?**

Cluttered work spaces are my pet peeve, which is ironic because I like to use Stickies and put notes all over the place. Minimalism YouTube videos has helped with this and has helped me focus on my studies.

**What famous person, past or present, would you like to have lunch with, and why?**

I would like to have lunch with the Sargent-at-Arms of the House of Commons Post who protected the House of Commons in October of 2014, when the Soldier on Post was fatally shot. I unfortunately did not get to meet the Sargent when I was in Ottawa, as he has inspired me throughout my career. His bravery and selflessness is legendary, and I got to see the bullet holes in the Senate Library during my private Tour on behalf of Member Rachael Harder. It was such an honour to see the walls and hear their stories and I would like to have lunch with the man to ask him about his inspirations in life.

**Describe the proudest moment in your life.**

Running a 01:14 time on the Ottawa Army Run last year.

**Describe one thing that distinguishes you from most other people.**

My ability to sense people's emotional states. I have spent a lot of time studying micro expressions, macro expressions, and the practical application of such in the security and travel industries within Canada. You spend enough time getting lied to in relationships and you start to learn the techniques of the "good liars." I am proud to say that by using creative, simple words, I have been able to diffuse some tense situations.

**What is the most valuable lesson you have learned in life?**

I have learned to not hesitate to ask people questions. If you wonder something about a person in journalism or law enforcement, you have the freedom of speech to ask that person a question, worded carefully of course. As nothing will stop them from asking you whatever is on their mind; return the favour.

**What (non-AU) book are you reading now?**

The Peep Diaries by Hal Niedzviecki, which is about the age of security and nosiness we live in. Nothing is secure. Nothing goes unpublished.

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



## Smooth Sailing to Convocation The Logistics of Getting you to AU

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Next month, hundreds of students—I mean *graduands*—will make the trek to Athabasca for convocation.

For many, it will be the first time they've visited AU's campus. For some, it may be the first time they've visited Alberta.

I went to convocation in June 2018. It wasn't my first trip to Alberta, but it was definitely my first time going to Athabasca. If you're an obsessive planner, like I am, you've probably got your trip planned down to a T. But just in case you've got a few loose ends to tie up, here are some logistical tips.

### Getting from Edmonton to Athabasca.

You can stay in Edmonton and get the free AU shuttle bus to and from convocation. I didn't do that, because it seemed like the day would be too rushed (and I still believe it would have been.)

Instead, I opted to stay right in Athabasca. My

husband and I rented a car from the Edmonton airport and drove two hours to Athabasca. If you can avoid rush hour periods in Edmonton, it's an easy drive. Once you get north of the city, the drive is through pleasant rural scenery. (For those graduating from Faculty of Health or Faculty of Business programs, staying in Edmonton may be your better option, as there are events planned for you at Edmonton hotels; see the Convocation Accommodation page for details.)

### Driving Tip 1.

We found the route (linked from AU's Convocation Travel page) Google suggested to exit the airport absurd; better to follow the road signs that direct you east along Airport Road to Highway 2. The remainder of Google's directions were fine: go north on Highway 2, then use Highway 216 to skirt Edmonton's western edge, and re-join Highway 2 near St. Albert. Your last chance to stock up on travel food or drink is in St. Albert, because the highway from that point bypasses all communities until Athabasca.

### Driving Tip 2.

Do not speed! Our car rental agency advised us that speed limits are strictly enforced by photo-radar in Alberta. Twenty over the limit may be sort-of acceptable on Ontario highways, but five over is plenty in Alberta. Make sure you're not the fastest vehicle on the road, or you might have a surprise speeding ticket charge accompanying your car rental charges on your credit card bill.

### Accommodation.

Rooms fill up quickly at convocation time in Athabasca, so book ahead for the best selection. We stayed at the Super 8 on the east side of Athabasca and found it just fine—it included breakfast, wifi, and a surprisingly large indoor waterpark. A Tim Horton's and other food outlets are nearby. There are several other reasonably-priced motels in town; none are particularly near the



university, but it's not a big town. You might want to check out Deanna Roney's 2017 article [Things to Do and Avoid at Convocation](#) before you make any decisions.

### Stay awhile.

If you want time to explore Athabasca University's campus, and the town itself, plan on at least a two-night stay. You'll be better relaxed for convocation day if you don't have to rush there in the morning, or rush away right after the ceremony. Be aware that campus buildings may not be open for visitors on Saturday; if you want in inside look, plan on a Friday visit.

Next week, we'll share some insider tips to help your convocation day go smoothly. The more you know, the less you'll stress!

*Barbara Lehtiniemi is a writer, photographer, and AU graduate (BGS 2018.) She lives on a windswept rural road in Eastern Ontario.*



## How Does it Feel to be in the Role of *The Learner*?

**Nichole Parker**



Challenged to keep an independent reflection journal, my current AU course (NURS 623 – gracefully instructed by Dr. Barbara Low), posed the question, “how does it feel to be in the role of the learner”? At first glance, this question was a simple one that I could journal in a few quick minutes: nervous, excited, and at times overwhelming. However, upon initiating this quick reflection, it proved to be a heavy concept that is too easily oversimplified.

As many of you reading this already know, a few words are not adequate to describe the way it feels to be in a new role as *a learner*. Nor can my learning journey be proficiently articulated in a sentence. It was more than any adjective could offer. Some of the most grateful experiences I have involve being in the role of a “learner”—even if I was the role of a “teacher.”

As a keen volunteer, I have learned more from the vulnerable populations I have had the privilege of working with than I could ever have taught. In my profession, my clients and their families have their footprint in the momentum which shaped my professional identity and values. My amazing children and husband have taught me deeply meaningful insights into who I am. It appears I have always been a “learner,” but now, as a student, I am a “formal learner.” My identity as a student is as an extension to who I am—my professional aspirations. This aspect is terrifying since my future aspirations are guided by my natural characteristics, talents, and long-term goals. Therefore, the role of a “formal learner” may dictate the level of congruency between that of which I aspire and that which I can attain. It involuntarily places a deep reflection on whether I have the ability to do this. I scan the general course goals, amazed by the complex and exciting

opportunities that will await any successful learner. I rush to articulate how the assignment structure will build upon my skills and am profoundly intrigued of how this course will strengthen my contributions towards my aspirations. The magnified influence that I could potentially have toward the vulnerable populations I volunteer with, the intensified difference I could make for my clients and their families, and the insightful dialogue that would be ingrained into my professional lens.

The anxiety is refreshingly replaced with motivation and excitement. The deep reflection is reassuring, as I am reminded of my perseverance and the endurance that ripples from the significant dream I have held for ten years—the very reason why I find myself a formal learner and an AU student.

With my eager persistence, enthusiasm, and dedication to my studies, I can only be grateful for the student-work-family balance that an online distance education University can offer. I am consistently impressed by the innovative use of communications technology available to enhance my learning and collective networking opportunities. To trust in myself, my online peers, supportive educators, and resource-rich university will be some of the most powerful strategies to propel me through my learner role. The ability to resist regressing inward when intimidated by the journey ahead, and instead to focus on stepping one foot in front of the other—to progress my developing momentum—will be a challenging feat.

My quick assumption that turned into a deep reflection inspired me, and I hope that where-ever you find yourself, in whatever roles, that you feel a connection to this shared experience as a learner. That you know that you are not alone, we are all in this together, pressing forward.

In gratitude, Nichole Parker

*Nichole is enthusiastic about sharing hope, inspiration, gratitude, encouragement and helpful resources – spreading connectedness in an asynchronous communication based educational platform.*



## Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

**Scholarship name:** Got a Spine Scholarship

**Sponsored by:** Arctic Chiropractic

**Deadline:** June 2, 2019, 11:59 pm EST

**Potential payout:** \$500

**Eligibility restriction:** Applicants must be Canadian or U.S. residents, attending college or university in Canada or the U.S. full-time as of October 2019, and have a GPA of 2.5 or greater in their last academic year.

**What's required:** An online application, including one maximum-1000 word essay on one of three given topics related to back problems, and one maximum-250 word essay describing why you feel you deserve the scholarship.

**Tips:** Browse Arctic Chiropractic's website for material to help with your back-problem essay.

**Where to get info:** [www.arcticchiropracticjuneau.com/chiropractor\\_juneau.php](http://www.arcticchiropracticjuneau.com/chiropractor_juneau.php)



## Women of Interest

### Rae Chittick

Barb Godin



University of British Columbia Archives,  
Photographer Unknown [UBC 56.1/13]

In 1946, Rae Chittick was elected president of the Canadian Nurses Association. Prior to this, for twenty-five years, she was a health educator at the Calgary Normal School. Miss Chittick was the president of CARNA from 1940-1942. CARNA is a professional organization for Alberta's 37,000 registered nurses with the mandate of serving the public interest by supporting excellence within the registered nursing profession. Chittick was a director of the McGill School of Graduate Nurses, where she began a master's program and a basic nursing course that ultimately lead to a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing.

Rae Chittick was born in 1898 in Burgoyne, Ontario and grew up in Alberta. She became a teacher but later, following an influenza epidemic in the prairies, chose to go into nursing. She graduated from John Hopkins Hospital School of Nursing in 1922 after earning a master's degree in public health nursing and education.

Throughout her career Rae Chittick was committed to improving the standards of nursing by advancement of the educational requirements. Along with her predecessor Mary Agnes Snively,

Chittick held the belief that nurses needed to be better educated, in fact, she believed they needed to be university educated. She felt that a university education, which included studies in the humanities and science, would provide nurses with a more thorough understanding of holistic care. Chittick believed nurses should be included in policy decision making along with other health care professionals, and, to achieve this, they needed a university education.

Rae Chittick also thought nurses who received a broad education base would be able to be more effective nurses, as they would be able to see the deeper meaning within the professional organization and within their nursing career. She felt a university education would assist nurses in achieving autonomy and in meeting their patient's needs by being able to provide excellent bed side care. Chittick's view attracted wide attention over the years, resulting in an invitation from the World Health Organization to facilitate the establishment of nursing programs in the West Indies and Ghana.

In 1969 Rae Chittick retired and moved to Vancouver, BC, where she spent her time pursuing an interest in painting with water-colors and continued to write articles for nursing journals. On June 25, 1975, Miss Chittick was made a member of the Order of Canada for her distinguished contributions in the field of nursing education. Miss Chittick passed away in 1992.

Additional information on Rae Chittick can be found at: <https://www.longwoods.com/content/16316/nursing-leadership/profile-of-a-leader-rae-chittick-a-thoughtful-leader>

*Barbara Godin is a graduate of AU and writes the "Dear Barb" column. She lives in London, Ontario with her husband, and two dogs. She can be reached on twitter @BarbGod*





## Porkpie Hat Kaleidoscope

Darjeeling Jones



I am seven years old, and hiding in my basement bedroom, waiting for my father's anger to subside. He's in the kitchen above me, hurling pots, pans, plates at the wall. It's not my first rodeo, as they say. I know it will pass, like a wild thunderstorm. With luck, all it will do is rattle the windows, set the dogs barking, and quicken my pulse with fear. I just have to stay safely out of the way, because the lightning, if it strikes, will fry me to my core.

At times like this, when one is waiting for a severe storm to blow over, it is important to have something at hand to take your mind off the fear. So I have these standard activities, these totemic rituals to pass the time and to deliver me from harm. I work on a paint-by-numbers tigers, read a Tin Tin comic, turn the radio on softly, so as not to attract attention from above. This one day, when I am seven about to turn eight, I pick up a kaleidoscope, a cardboard tube rigged with mirrors, filled with a handful of glass beads. I turn on the desk lamp, place the end of the tube against the light bulb, look through the lens, turn the barrel, and am transported to another world.

Nearly fifty years later, I still remember that precise moment, one of the most formative of my life. I truly felt as though I were looking at a radiant vision of some better, more radiant, more wondrous world. I felt if I could somehow crawl through the luminous tunnel of tumbling lights, I would emerge into a dimension of pure adventure, pure joy. I know this sounds very strange, but there are times when I feel that every dream I have dreamt, every journey I have made, everything I have ever yearned for and pursued, has on some metaphorical level been my attempt to travel closer to that crystalline realm that I glimpsed that afternoon.

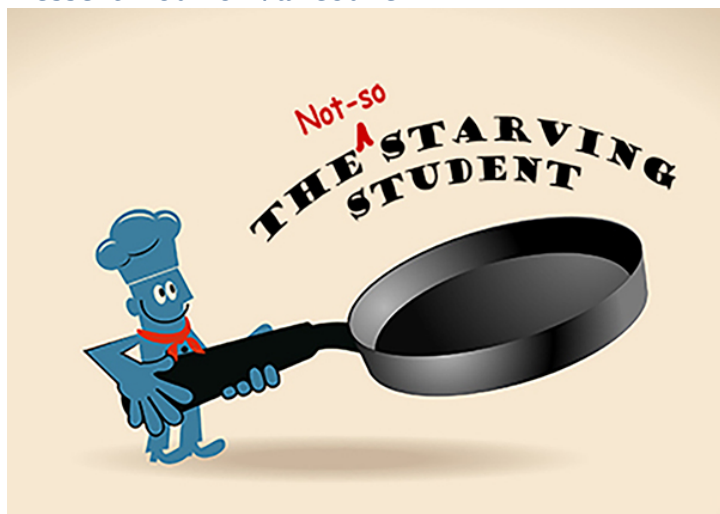
Here's a question: are we not, each of us, a sort of existential kaleidoscope? The flimsy tube of our physical being is filled with a kerjillion bright, translucent beads, representing all the countless elements that combine to make us who we are. These beads are memories, stories, genetic influences. Some of them shine like diamonds, some of them glow like rubies, some of them are broken glass, and some of them are blood. There are beads that are as light as quarks, and others that are the baggage of a lifetime, seemingly as all the weight of the world. If you look closely, you can see that within each bead there is enclosed a tiny fleck of who we are: a fragment of DNA, a frozen moment, a childhood fairy-tale, a parent's legacy of anger or of love, a song we heard, a scene from a film, a line of poetry that stopped us in our tracks, an act of betrayal, an act of selflessness, a kiss, a punch, the touch of a hand.

In a sense each of us, I believe, when we are trying to make sense of our wildly complicated selves, our wildly complicated lives, is turning the barrel of a cheap and clever toy, hoping to find the right combination of light and tumbling coloured glass that will allow us to gasp with wonder, and exclaim "So that's what beauty is!"



## The Not-So Starving Student Dessert Tour of Vancouver

**Xin Xu**



With Vancouver boasts eateries that draw people from all over the world and some of the most unique desserts in Canada. I had a chance to experience this first-hand on my latest trip to the area. Prior to arriving at our hotel, I had already made a list of top 10 desserts to try in Vancouver. Some of the most unique experiences I've had include the following:

### Bingsoo

Korean bingsu or bingsoo is a dessert that has taken the world by storm. The

flaky texture of the shaved ice dessert makes you forget that you're actually biting into ice. The toppings are also endless and highly instagrammable—it's a feast for the eye and stomach! We tried the Injeolmi Bingsu that features traditional Korean rice cake chunks, red bean, and condensed milk.

Location: Sulmida



### Tofu dessert

Who said tofu had to be savory? This one tofu joint in Richmond, Vancouver boasts various exotic flavors of tofu dessert ranging from durian to red bean. We ordered a durian tofu and a sesame, redbean-topped. tofu parfait. For me, it was my craving for lightly sweetened desserts brought me to this hidden corner store.

Location: ITofu



### Japanese cheesecake

Both Vancouver and Toronto can now boast the presence of Uncle Tetsu Cheesecake - a Japanese cheesecake franchise. Having visited the store in Toronto, I paid a visit to the Vancouver store to discover first-hand whether there was a difference between them. In Toronto, I ordered a matcha Japanese Cheesecake that was so fluffy and light I felt weight being lifted off my shoulders. Japanese cheesecake is quite unlike your average grocery store cheesecake. It is freshly baked and warm, initially, and melts in your mouth without the same density as a standard cheesecake.

Location: Uncle Tetsu





### Oolong tea Souffle

This unique dessert featured tapioca pearls that decorated a light, spongy souffle cake. This souffle was bathed in a rich Oolong tea cream that gave added flare to the usual souffle. Biting into this cake was equivalent to my idea of biting into a cloud as a child. The tapioca pearls were chewy and added a different texture to the spongy dessert.

Location: Bobii Fruit

### Korean butter toast

Unlike your average toast, this beauty of a dessert has a matcha syrup filling inside the bread. My personal love for matcha led to our choice of a matcha powder topped bread. The bread is toasted to perfection on the outside and spongy on the inside. Whipped cream and ice cream decorate the exterior and add some creaminess to each bite. Surprisingly, the matcha gave a slight bitterness that contrasted with the whipped cream and syrup filling providing a perfect balance.

Location: Sulmida

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



## Five Fibs from the Book of Job (and Why They're Still Hanging Around)

**Wanda Waterman**



*Let I know that you can do all things;  
no purpose of yours can be thwarted.  
You asked, 'Who is this that obscures my plans without  
knowledge?'  
Surely I spoke of things I did not understand,  
things too wonderful for me to know.  
~Job 42:2-3, NIV*

The Book of Job is believed to be one of the oldest books in the Bible, if not *the* oldest. It was likely handed down orally over many years, as there's a shift in the language mode of the story from beginning to end, the first part being more like folklore, the middle forming a kind of dialectic, and the end being a mystical enlightenment. What's amazing about this ancient book is the way it completely overturns our assumptions and points us to a higher reality. Despite it, the falsehoods it refutes are still very much in circulation. Here are some of those falsehoods and why we like to hold onto them.



**If you're suffering, it's because you've sinned.**

Job's friends, supposedly having come to comfort him, repeat this refrain ad nauseum. Who knows where this one came from? But it's so persistent we don't even need to say it. Victims of sexual assault were asking for it. The poor just aren't trying hard enough, or they spend too much on booze. You're sick because you didn't look after yourself, and so on. The irony is that the Bible itself doesn't back this up unless you isolate a few verses from the context. Most of those who suffer in the Bible are suffering because of something that's happened to them.

So why do we cling to this misconception? Because it's easier to blame victims than to help them. Blaming them also eases our feelings of guilt when we're not suffering. This is a fib of the closed heart, and will no doubt go on being an excuse for egotism as long as humans grace the planet.

**If you just say you're sorry, you can be happy again.**

Part of the pressure put on Job by his friends was to admit he had done wrong and to express regret and demand pardon. Trouble was, Job couldn't think of anything he had done wrong.

Had he done wrong, would repentance have restored his happiness? Experience proves otherwise, as it would have to Job's friends had they been honest about their own experiences. Believing that one's wrongs have been forgiven can take a huge load off for people who think that's enough. For those who are sincere enough in regret to wish to make amends and change their lives so as not to repeat their wrongs, the road is hard and long.

Believing that saying sorry will, in itself, restore your joy in every instance is a false belief in cheap grace; a religion that reduces spiritual growth to formulas and magical thinking. Easy solutions are very popular in times when we are pushed to excel and be productive all the time, which may explain that even now we assume that saying sorry, whether or not the word is sincere, makes everything better.

**You must not question God.**

Job's story explains that he was favoured by God because of his piety and faithfulness. And yet Job questioned God interminably. So did David, another one close to the heart of the almighty, and a number of prophets. Doubting, complaining, questioning, demanding are all part of the spectrum of rapport with a higher power. Refusing to question God means refusing to engage in the kind of exchanges that lead to further understanding.

It's hard to tell where this maxim comes from today, but it appears to be most strongly held among religious conservatives and extremists (please don't assume the two are always the same) as a means of maintaining control over followers.

**Suffering comes only to evildoers and joy comes only to those who are right with God.**

Job's friends really harped on this one, and if life back then was anything like it is today, one wonders how they could have insisted on it with straight faces. As Simone Weil pointed out, one can always reduce the severity of one's suffering by consenting to a little evil. Evil pays, at least in business and politics, and honesty brings with it a host of limitations.

Who knows why we hang on to this one? Is it our envy at seeing the wicked prosper that makes us snarl, "They'll get what they deserve." Or is it the fact that those who do prosper insist on believing and making everyone else believe that their wealth is proof of superior humanity? Probably a little of both.

### **Pain is an evil in itself, and there is nothing to be gained by it.**

Not one of Job's friends suggested that he might make some wonderful discovery through his grief and pain, and certainly none foresaw the wonderful transformation of his fortunes. They all saw Job's grief, loss, poverty, and illness as evils to be avoided, a condition with no redemptive virtues. And yet as Job's story shows, suffering can open our eyes to the reality of things we only thought we understood before.

Even today we wrestle heroically away from suffering and make moral compromises to keep it at bay. Yet if we're honest with ourselves we have to acknowledge that some of the greatest blessings in our lives have arrived because of our suffering. What if that one hadn't broken our heart so that we could find this one? What if we hadn't lost that job and found this better one? What if we had never had that health crisis that taught us how precious life was?

. . .

In this world of lightspeed changes, it's strangely comforting to know that some of our misconceptions are older than Job. And also comforting to know that those who search for meaning in this vale of tears will surely find it.

*Wanda also writes the blog [The Mindful Bard: The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self](#).*



### **The Study Dude Homeschool Your Child?**

**Marie Well**



As an AU student, you've likely mastered independent learning. So, how about turning your self-taught skills into homeschooling your tots? But perhaps you lack, say, math, physics, or chemistry savvy? No worries. Author Christine Owens says you can still teach through "literature and life" (Owens, 2019, location 47 of 1527, 3%).

If I had homeschooled, I would've taught drumming, math, gym, art, and more. I can barely drum, though, but I'd want my child to thrive—maybe even gain world-class mastery. According to K. Anders Ericsson and Robert Pool, to gain world-class mastery, you should access world-class coaches (2016). And coaches cost cash.

So, how do you homeschool without know-how—and without going bankrupt? Sending kids to a few community lessons offers an option. I once bought my niece a toddler's drum set, which she loved. And I took her to two drumming lessons and two dance lessons. But she soon grew weary. That's the plight of schools and homeschools. Kids get bored.



But we're missing the point. It's not our passions that we should forge in the child. It's the child's passions on which we should build.

But you may wonder if young children tend to adopt their parents' interests. Not necessarily. My brother grew passionate about drama during elementary school. He'd play-act Jason from *Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>*, which thrilled me and my siblings, who served as his victims. And he'd torture me with his sarcastic puppets on his cardboard box stages. He'd also act as our dungeon master for *Dungeons and Dragons*, performing multiple characters within a matter of a game. In my mind, he had the potential for world-class stage performances. Yet, none of my parents loved drama, except Papa who tuned in, now-and-then, to stand-up comedy.

But little did we know, if my brother's love for drama got tapped into early, a whole world of homeschooling could've been built upon it.

So, what could he have learned? Well, the topic of drama could've branched into

- Stage acting
- Shakespeare
- Comedy writing
- Scriptwriting
- Figures of speech
- Budgeting (math) for film-makers
- Dancing
- Anatomy
- Singing
- Fred Astaire
- Mechanics of video equipment
- And so on.

According to author Christine Owens, these subtopics are called "rabbit trails" (2019). Rabbit trails enable parents to use a child's passions to build a whole homeschool curriculum. For instance, Christine Owens built rabbit trails out of her kid's love of (classical) literature (2019). So, how exactly does she do this?

As a quick rundown, she picks a book, breaks it into subtopics, and researches those subtopics. She then cuts out a picture for each subtopic, pasting each picture on its own cue card. Her kids then choose which picture they wish to explore. So, not only do mom and tots read the book, they also learn about related topics—yes, rabbit trails (Owens, 2019).

Cleverly, Christine Owens also seeks to answer her kids' off-the-cuff questions (2019). For instance, she'll look up an answer if her child blurts, "Why are butterflies so pretty?" or, "What makes stoves so hot?" Yes, even topics not on the agenda offer opportunities for education (Owens, 2019).

But kids' passions morph over time, right? No worries again. Just adjust your curriculum to continue the fun (Owens, 2019). Who wants to homeschool bored kids anyway? So, homeschool excited kids by tuning into their passions (Owens, 2019).

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**Brittany Daigle****Course Exam***AU courses, up close***Course Exam****Brittany Daigle**

ADMN 201 (Introduction to Business Studies) is a three-credit introductory business and administrative studies course that is targeted towards students who want an overview of formal business studies at the university level. This course introduces students to the fundamental business topics (or functions) that comprise the typical majors found in Faculties of Business at universities around the world, including accounting, finance, management, and marketing. There are no prerequisites for ADMN 201 and there is a Challenge for Credit option if that is of interest to you.

Introduction to Business Studies is made up of four parts, fifteen lessons, three assignments (weighing ten, twenty, and ten percent respectively), a midterm examination worth twenty percent, and a final examination for the remaining forty percent. The concepts discussed in this course cover several interesting topics, such as managing the business enterprise, organizing the business enterprise, understanding accounting, entrepreneurship, marketing principles, pricing and promoting, money and banking, and much more. To receive credit for ADMN 201, students must achieve a minimum grade of fifty percent on each of the exams and an overall grade of fifty percent or better for the entire course. Students are advised not to attempt the final exam until you have received feedback on all three assignments.

The final examination for this course must be taken online at an invigilated location. It is the students' responsibility to ensure a computer with an Internet connection and a current web browser is available for your use at the invigilation center.

David Annand and Ann Conquergood have collaborated for the answers within this article. David is the course coordinator and Ann is the academic expert and marker for the course. David has been working at Athabasca since July 17, 1989 and Ann joined in 2002. David has been the course coordinator for ADMN 201 for the last five years and Ann has been the academic expert for four years. David states "The old saw applies: If you want to talk to the person in charge, talk to me, Dave. If you want to talk to the person who knows what's going on, talk to Ann."

Alongside ADMN 201, David is the academic area manager for FMAC 503 (Financial and Managerial Accounting in the MBA program) and ACCT 245 (Not-for-Profit Accounting). Ann is the academic advisor and tutor for ADMN 232 (Introduction to Management) and MKTG 440 (Marketing Strategy).

David states "I am a Chartered Professional Accountant (CPA, CA). I worked in public practice for eight years before I decided to pursue an academic career. I have written several introductory accounting texts that are available as open educational resources. My research interests focus on open and distributed learning theory. I have five adult children. I can retire in a few months, but do not plan to do so. The work at Athabasca University is very interesting, and the students are great."

Ann states “I echo Dave's sentiments about Athabasca University work and students - they are great. Over the course of the years I have worked with many students and have learned a lot from them. Although most of my work is now with Athabasca University as an Academic Expert and a Tutor, in previous years my husband and I started, grew, and then sold an engineering company. Although I have an MBA, starting a business allowed me to fully experience most of the cycles of business growth as well as experience firsthand the joys and challenges of being a business owner. I work hard at being fit and trying to eat healthily. Other interests include fiber arts like sewing and knitting.”

When asked to describe the course to students, they explain that “ADMN 201 is an introductory business course that touches on all of the major areas of business. Students learn about the internal and external business environment, and what managers do, and covers topics like finance, accounting and marketing. You also learn how to complete a business plan. The course is designed to introduce students to all areas of business and business terminology so they can better be prepared for management.”

As for the structure of the assignments and the examinations, they describe that “The course has three assignments - a research paper on any topic of business, and two assignments that together make up a business plan. The business plan can be completed on any business of the student's choosing. There is also a midterm and final exam.”

When asked what type of work ethic that students will have to have in order to be successful in this course, they state “Consistent work is always best with a university course. We always recommend completing the assignments and exams in the suggested order so that appropriate material is learned before the assessment.”

They continue by providing advice to students, stating “In order to get the most from the course it is recommended that you start early and work consistently in the course. Please do not hesitate to contact the Academic Expert for the course for help. Also, use the study schedule template to develop a plan for course completion and try to follow it.”

As for which students they would recommend ADMN 201 to, they state that “The course introduces people to a variety of business topics and functions so those who wish to study business but are unsure of which area could benefit from the course. Those that wish to aspire for management or supervisory positions would also benefit because there is an introduction to accounting, finance, management functions and human resource topics.”

When asked what students take away from this course, they explain that “Course feedback indicates that students enjoy applying business concepts to a real-life business. Students should also be able to read business literature without difficulty.”

As for aspects of the course that students struggle with, they believe that “Some students struggle with the accounting chapter. However, there is supplementary information built into the course and the academic expert is very happy to help and give feedback.”

Whether ADMN 201 is a degree or program requirement of yours, or if the topics that are discussed above are of interest to you, this course will have you learning interesting material surrounding the topic of business.

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



## Fly on the Wall

### The Truth is in the Tools

Jason Sullivan



### AU-thors of our own Life's Meaning

What's the meaning of life? It's a timeless question apt to induce eye rolls. Ever since cave people digested a dinner of mastodon under moonlight, humans have pondered purpose and mulled meaning. As denizens of the universal cave of AU, the question of life's meaning is eminently answerable for us at some level simply because we're here as students. No matter our broader motivation, returning to school as adults illustrates a personal distance between where we are today and where we want to

go with our future lives. Athabasca, for us, represents one means to a meaningful life. And, chances are, if we are enjoying our learning process, we're probably experiencing success in our grades as well. As the sports metaphor goes, winning is contagious. AU is not only a means to an end but also an end in itself; the journey is rewarding as a meaningful addition to our lives.

The creation of meaning implies a process of definition and discovery. Like a string of frog eggs or a trail of papaya seeds, the creation of a meaningful life requires a concatenation of reality held together with an invisible thematic thread. Bounding the meaning of our AU studies is our disciplinary major. If our major is psychology, we're looking at topics like individual meaning and motivation. If it's history, we're investigating past events and their larger setting. Cycles recur wherever the gathering of information occurs; a scholar, when tossing a stone into a pond, can't help but note the impact of the ripples. Toss many stones and you have a scholarly study complete with statistics. And when you have enough evidence patterns appear.

Meaning appears from a conjunction of facts and feelings and their relation to the ongoing saga of existence. As Socrates said on many a bumper sticker (not to mention as quoted by Plato in antiquity), the unexamined life is not worth living. But what of philosophy, surely it's the master discipline when we consider the meaning of life?

### Interrogating Philosophy: Minds Terribly Wasted?

All too often philosophy is decried as a domain of useless lackadaisical speculation that rarely leaves campus lawns or parental basements. And yet, inspiration often comes in fleets and starts, arriving in snatches of desperate bravado and instants of titanic heroism. As Oscar Wilde famously put it, we're all in the gutter, but some of us are gazing at the stars. And to get the meaningful poetry of a moment isn't something you just sit down and do. One has to be in a certain state of open mind.

The blogger, Mark Manson, notes that when we're truly productive it's often only for short, blisteringly effective segments of time. Regrettably this applies more to creative academic work than more mundane tasks such as mowing a lawn. Manson notes that when we over-apply ourselves to our creative and academic labours there are not only diminishing returns, but at a certain point, we actually produce an overall negative return when we have to chuck out low quality excess dross. It's like in golf: if you practice putting excessively, you'll get a case of the



yips, and then even basic success becomes elusive (GolfYipStudy, online). We can practice ourselves out of perfection.

Manson explains that this regression happens “because bad writing isn’t just bad—bad writing creates *more work for yourself* because it requires way more time to revise and edit” (Manson, online). So, philosophizing about the meaning of life may merely complicate an otherwise pleasant existence. Why ask why? However, this sort of anti-intellectual stance plays into the stereotype of philosophers as idlers who live a life composed of sitting and talking and wandering and pondering. In fact, as with one’s evolution as a student, our philosophical journey toward a meaningful life takes on many concrete forms. We act according to our beliefs, after all. And when we are passionate is when we are the most effective. As holocaust survivor and renowned psychologist Victor Frankl put it: “he who has a why to live for can bear almost any how” (Frankl, online). To be a philosopher, in some sense then, is part of being a human. Either consciously or unconsciously, we compose and abide by some sort of tract, some mission statement.

### Problems of Addressing Problems with Definitions

At AU, our discipline tends to bound our studies, with glorious exceptions in the form of electives. Disciplines naturally have limits, the better to maintain their form. And yet, even though philosophy deals with the love of wisdom (thus living up to the literal linguistic origins of its name), it can lead itself into a corner by emulating the boundedness of other disciplines. This process of appeasement isolates philosophy, leaving it immured apart in a certain *anchorite* squalor. Contemporary philosopher, Daniel Dennett, notes that much philosophy is mere game-playing—where everyone agrees on a series of rules and then, with blithe and bland certitude, goes about following them with minion-like precision.

Dennett, pieced together by Justin Weinberg, summarizes his stance:

“Philosophy in some quarters has become self-indulgent, clever play in a vacuum that’s not dealing with problems of any intrinsic interest.” Much if not all philosophical work in analytic metaphysics, for example, is “willfully cut off from any serious issues” (Dennett, Weinberg, online)

## AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

### Research Webinar Series: Why you should never accept a dinner request from a hagfish

Tues, May 14, 1:00 to 2:00 pm MDT  
AU Edmonton, Peace Hills Trust Building, Room 1217

In person and online

Hosted by AU

[news.athabascau.ca/events/research-webinar-series-why-you-should-never-accept-a-dinner-request-from-a-hagfish/](https://news.athabascau.ca/events/research-webinar-series-why-you-should-never-accept-a-dinner-request-from-a-hagfish/)

No registration necessary; access Skype link from above link

### Preparing an Abstract for a Conference

Tues, May 14, 2:00 to 3:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies

[www.eventbrite.ca/e/fgs-presents-writing-an-abstract-for-a-conference-tickets-60827897880](https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/fgs-presents-writing-an-abstract-for-a-conference-tickets-60827897880)

Register online at above link

### BMgmt/CPHR Info Session

Tues, May 14, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-details/bmgmt-cphr-information-session-2019-05/](https://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/bmgmt-cphr-information-session-2019-05/)

Register online at above link

### Online MBA Application Webinar

Wed, May 15, 10:00 to 11:00 am MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-details/online-mba-executives-application-information-session-2019-may15/](https://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/online-mba-executives-application-information-session-2019-may15/)

Register online at above link

*All events are free unless otherwise specified*

Dennett saves his deepest jabs for the seemingly decadent essence of philosophers in general, calling them a “luxury decoration on society,” whose useful thoughts are scuttled to make room for “just games.” (ibid). Philosopher's play is useless and frivolous, Dennett pounces with. That's one playground it's tough to justify in the real world! To illustrate this gamey realm Dennett references chess aficionados who can play with and watch each other for days and never leave the mental space of their game's rules. Chess enthusiasts and philosophers, claims Dennett, are too hidebound and immobile to meaningfully impact the social and academic world. At AU we know all too well that the first question an interlocutor asks about our studies is *what is that good for?*

### Meaning: What Can We Rule Out?

This questioning of the possibility for philosophy to achieve useful, even timeless, meaning goes back, way back, to Ancient Greece. Protagoras argued that “man is the measure of all things” (Protagoras in Mark, online). Surely some truths are timeless, though. Geometry would seem an ideal candidate for this trophy. What's more verifiable and absolute than a freakin' triangle? If the phrase 'it is what is' ever applied literally, it's surely to that three pointed paragon of calculable virtue. Plato noted that the abstract idea of a triangle supersedes triangular referentials down here in the lowly earthly realm. He famously claimed that there existed an etheric form of Absolutes up in the heavens, of which corporeal versions were only a series of imperfect copies. So maybe there's an abstract and absolute meaning of life out there, only that we might find it.

Yet, geometry too has limits, and, specifically, the limits of what counts as a geometric statement. W.H. Walsh noted that “the mathematician starts with definitions that are in effect arbitrary combinations of concepts; the philosopher must work toward definitions not argue from them” (Walsh, 307). So just to denote meaning, as such, would seem a weighty task. Crucially too, it's a job without utensils, tools or physical corollary. It's all in the brain. Or mind, Or head. Everything depends how we define things, how we create and identify meanings. Protractors, compasses and patience may be required to draw a an artistic face and are even more necessary when engineering, say, a bridge over the Fraser River or a trip to Mars. Yet with the meaning of life we have to pick our spades even more carefully; meaning may be the ultimate personal construction. Next week we'll enlist Immanuel Kant to further our inquiry into life's meaning as it applies to we academic vagabonds of distance education wisdom.

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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.*



## Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



#### **AthaU Facebook Group**

Chanelle wants to know the fee for a 6-credit AU course; another group member posts a link to AU's fee calculator page. Jeffi's frustrated because OSAP semester rules are preventing her from taking a 6-credit course without delaying her graduation next year; no solution in sight so far.

Other posts include AU's accounting degree, delays in assignment marks, and calculators for exams.

#### **reddit**

A question about easy, GPA-boosting courses; does FNCE 249 qualify?

#### **Twitter**

@AthabascaU tweets: "#AthabascaU is hiring a Marketing Coordinator to provide oversight to AU's digital & non-digital marketing campaigns, activities, & programs in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including Deans, faculty members, and business unit leaders. Apply <https://bit.ly/2XVQwYU>."

@austudentsunion tweets: "Need a new computer for your AU studies? Check out our Computer Bursary - supplies new laptops for students in financial need! <https://bit.ly/1GIWJhi> #igo2AU."

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



With Mother's Day coming up May 12, we cast a nostalgic glance back at mother's in our past.

**Unpaid and under-appreciated.** Writer Carole E. Trainor describes how the family survived after her mother went on strike. "Like many men of his day, my father believed that a mother's love was best conveyed through a lifetime of self-sacrifice and service to those she loved." The Best Pressed Pants in all of Prince Edward Island: The Day My Mother Quit Her Unpaid Housework, April 7, 2006.

**Grand Mothers, too.** Jennifer McNeil chronicles her quiet grandmother's vocal battle with dementia. "Now she is fighting death with a loudness that is startling, as if she has finally found her voice after all these years." Do Not Go Gentle: My Grandmother's Rage, January 25, 2008.

## The Fit Student

### Enzymes for when you Relapse

Marie Well



What if you freed yourself of disease, but, after being bedridden with a bug, the disease reawakened? If you're like me, you'd fumble to find a way to defeat the foe forever.

I got smacked with an icky cold. After ten days, the cold waned: I scarcely blew my nose, rarely sneezed, and barely coughed. But I felt so feeble I could hardly stand. My loved one chimed in that I looked fine—and I did. But I felt dead-tired.

Stupidly, I googled “post flu fatigue.” Post flu fatigue works like chronic fatigue syndrome but is kindled by the flu (Seladi-Schulman, Jun 29, 2018)—and I sported the symptoms. Fear struck. Might I have relapsed into chronic fatigue syndrome?

Two years ago, I got battered with what I believe to be undiagnosed chronic fatigue syndrome. It felt so ghastly I'd, time and again, sleep thirty hours straight. I'd also writhe with nausea and fatigue for three days most weeks. But I freed myself through diet and fitness—until now.

Now fatigued, I stewed over two scenarios: change or relapse. I settled with graded exercise. Graded exercise soothes some with chronic fatigue syndrome, but hurts others (Douceff, Oct 2, 2017 – 5:40 AM ET). It heals me.

So, I did jumping jacks without the jumps (called controlled jumping jacks), upping increments of ten from ten reps to fifty. Between sets, I rested while swallowing sour cabbage, sunflower seeds, apples, and berries. To my delight, the fatigue faded.

But what if post flu fatigue slogged me every cold? And what if I relapse into chronic fatigue syndrome?

I vowed to shape up my health. But I already workout up to nine hours a week. And my diet couldn't get more wholesome. Well, I could ditch plain yogurt and bran cereal. But these foods seem nourishing, right? It turns out, they're not top-notch. Dr. John Bergman says steer clear of commercial dairy (at 35:01 in video). And I say, “Why can't companies make bran sans dye and sugar?”

So, how else could I boost my health?

I pored over an article that claimed a study showed that “one would have to eat eight oranges today to derive the same amount of Vitamin A as our grandparents would have gotten from one” (Scheer & Moss, 2019). Lower food quality stems from “soil depletion: Modern agricultural methods have stripped increasing amounts of nutrition from the soil in which the food we eat



grows” (Scheer & Moss, 2019). Specifically, and based on the many health documentaries I’ve watched, I believe our food quality fell due to pesticides, GMOs, lack of biodiversity on farms, chemical (not animal) fertilizers, concentrated animal feeding operations, monocrops, and tractor tilling (killing) of crucial bacteria in the ground.

I thought, “How can we get more nutrition from our foods?” And that’s when I fancied the quick dietary fix: take digestive enzymes. “Digestive enzymes are required to break down all types of foods into small enough particles that our bodies can use” (Harris, 2018, location 567 of 1922, 29%). Enzymes include “proteases (which breaks down proteins), lipases (which break down fats), and carbohydrase (such as amylase, which breaks down carbohydrates)” (Harris, 2018, location 369 of 1922, 19%).

Enzymes matter because a “lack of enzymes prevents our bodies from absorbing the necessary nutrients for overall health and wellness” (Harris, 2018, location 567 of 1922, 29%). And as we get older, our enzymes decline (Kitani, Jan 11 2007).

So, I plan to snack on enzyme rich foods. Such foods include “kefir ...bananas ... soy sauce ... pineapples ... avocados ... bee pollen ... papayas ... sauerkraut ... miso ... kiwi ... and (vegetarian) tempeh” (Harris, 2018, location 599 of 1922, 21%). Bee pollen in particular “has over 5,000 different enzymes” (Harris, 2018, location 426 of 1922, 22%). “These foods have the enzymes that are needed to improve digestive function and the breaking down of foods, minerals, and vitamins” (Harris, 2018, location 464 of 1922, 24%).

Maybe eating enzyme-rich foods may step-up my health? And if you, too, have disease, such as leaky gut syndrome, enzymes may mend you, too (Harris, 2018). After all, “chronic stress, illness, malnutrition and the overuse of pharmaceutical drugs can all disrupt the internal synthesis of enzymes” (Harris, 2018, location 525 of 1922, 27%).

And I don’t want a relapse.

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Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Weeding them Off

Dear Barb:

*I am the parent of a university student and I'm wondering what happened to manners! It seems for the most part today's younger generation live by their own rules and are very inconsiderate of other people's feelings. A lot of my son's friends come over and barely look at me, even when they are talking to me. They are always on their phone, even during dinner. We have never allowed our son to be on his cell during dinner, but obviously his friends have not learned this. We invited one of Josh's friends over for dinner last week and he spent the entire dinner looking at this cell phone and texting between bites of food. He might as well have not come over. My son's other friends have done the same thing, it's very annoying for the rest of our guests. I considered telling him to put his phone away, but I don't want to embarrass him or my son. What should I have done in this situation? Thanks, Angela.*

Hey Angela:

Thanks for your letter. This is a very common problem and there are a few things you can do. First you could get your son to give his friend a heads up that dinner at his house means no cell phones. If your son does not want to mention it to his friend, then you will have to do it. Have a basket where people can leave their phones while having dinner. As everyone is gathering for dinner, casually mention where the basket is and to please leave cell phones in the basket. Hopefully when your son deposits his cell in the basket his friend will do the same. If his friend chooses not to, I guess there really isn't a lot you can do about it. If you find

this terribly annoying, you may want to rethink whether you want to include this friend in future dinner plans, as he's really not visiting, is he? Good luck Angela.

Dear Barb:

*I have been away attending school in another province and recently returned home for the summer. I hadn't seen my parents since September and they have changed a lot! As soon as I walked in the house I could smell weed! I was shocked, I had no idea my parents had ever smoked weed. When I asked about it, they said it's legal now and we tried it and we like it. I found this kind of strange, I don't feel comfortable with my parents smoking weed, but I'm not sure if I have a right to say anything to them. I need another opinion, what do you think? Thanks, April.*

Hi April:

Interesting letter. It is up to your parents whether they choose to smoke weed or not. Do you have an objection to them drinking wine? If the smoke or smell is bothering you, then you have a right to mention it. Parents who smoke cigarettes go outside to smoke, so I don't think it's unreasonable for you to expect your parents to do the same when smoking pot. Basically April, it is up to your parents what they do in their own home. Thanks for sharing.

Email your questions to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto: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**  
**That Magic Word****Wanda Waterman**



The information on this page is provided by the AU Students' Union. The Voice does not create this content. Contact AUSU at [services@ausu.org](mailto:services@ausu.org) with any questions about this article.

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **May 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Jun 1](#)
- **May 15:** [June degree requirements deadline](#)
- **May 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for July](#)
- **May 31:** [Gatineau Student Meet & Greet](#)
- **June 7-8:** [Athabasca University Convocation](#)
- **Jun 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Jul 1](#)

## New AUSU Open Mic Episode

Our latest AUSU Open Mic podcast episode is live!

### [Space, Process, and Northern Lights in Yellowknife](#)

- Join AUSU VP Finance & Administration Natasha Donahue and Executive Director Jodi Campbell as they discuss the role of the AUSU VPFA, what it's like to be an executive, and where a space-fan goes to watch the Aurora Borealis!

Check out all Open Mic episodes online [here](#).



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## Quebec Student Meet & Greet

AUSU is hosting a student meet & greet in Gatineau, Quebec on May 31! Come on out to meet fellow AU students, get to know your students' union executives, and get some free AUSU swag!

**When:** Friday, May 31 from 5:30 - 8:00pm EDT

**Where:** Boston Pizza, 179 Promenade du Portage, Gatineau, Quebec. J8X 2K5

RSVP to [services@ausu.org](mailto:services@ausu.org) or on our [Facebook event](#).



Meet up in Gatineau!

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# CLASSIFIEDS

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Classifieds are free for AU students!  
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## THE VOICE

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