



THE VOICE

Vol 29 Issue 02 2021-01-15

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

Self-Care Habits You Should Adopt

Making for a Better 2021

A Perfectionists Guide to Resolutions

For a Happier New Year

Plus:

SSR: The Matrix Resolutions

*Fly on the Wall: Making a Mess
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

Repudiating Resolutions

Karl Low



I always find it interesting when the writers for *The Voice Magazine* independently come up with a theme for the issue. Of course, I don't think anybody would be terribly surprised that the first issue we get this year has a strong theme about New Years' Resolutions, coming as it does at the start of the new year.

No, what surprising to me is the almost unanimous agreement among the writers that New Year's Resolutions, well, kind of suck. They make us feel bad about the year past, they gave us reason to delay necessary changes, and we end up breaking them and just feeling guilty about them anyway. I have to wonder if this sentiment is somewhat amplified by the year that just passed, one that, for many of us, slowed down what we think of as the progress in our lives.

Regardless, if you're on board with the refusal of resolutions, you'll be happy with this issue, whether it's the Struggling Student urging you to ignore the timing aspect, or the Fly on the Wall wondering if the problem

is how the words define and limit both what we can resolve and the expectations of how that resolution can be met. Or maybe you'll just take comfort in reading about how you're not the only one to miss your targets for your new years' resolutions, as Emily Viggiani confronts perfectionism and the New Year, or Xine Xu's look at the habits that might help you have a better year, whether or not you have a resolution for it.

But our feature article this week is an interview with fellow student and our own ranting struggling student, Angela Pappas. If you've wondered what drives a struggling student to start doing crazy things like writing for a student magazine about finances, or even just want to hear how a globe-trotting student has come to value AU, then you'll want to read the Minds We Meet.

Also, I'm very pleased to announce the return of the Course Exam. This column always has several installments among the most read articles on *The Voice Magazine*, and we're rebooting it this week with Karen Lam's first entry, a look at Math 215. This is actually a course we looked at before, as it was the first one that our previous Course Exam columnist looked at, but that was almost five years ago, and we thought it seemed appropriate to take a look back, update the column, and see if there's been any significant changes.

Of course, we also have a selection of student provided advice, recipes, events, scholarships, our round-up of what's hot that AU students are talking about, and more. So, if you've made a resolution to get more involved with your fellow students, why not start with the latest issue of *The Voice Magazine*?

Enjoy the read!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl'.

MINDS WE MEET



Who are your fellow students? It can feel like you are all alone in your studies, but across the nation, around the globe, students like you are also pursuing their AU education, and *The Voice Magazine* wants to bring their stories to you. If you would like to be featured next, do not hesitate to get in touch!

The Voice Magazine recently had the chance to chat with Angela Pappas, based in Brantford, Ontario, the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee, and the Attawandaron/Neutral peoples. Angela is finishing AU's University Certificate in Management Foundations, with plans to ladder into a Bachelor of Management by early 2021.

Angela currently works in risk management and insurance. She has been working full time throughout her program, and hopes that upon graduation, she can relax, enjoy more family time, and “getter a better work-life balance.” However, she also plans to take some further upgrading courses, to further her career.

Angela was born and raised in Regina, Saskatchewan, and spent her youth in Greece. After some years back in

Saskatchewan, she returned to Greece once again, eventually coming back to Canada at the age of twenty-nine. Although she has spent the past fifteen years working and studying, in 2018, she managed to take a long awaited two-month holiday in Greece.

When not studying, she likes “to go exploring” with her husband and puppy, including taking walks and long drives. She continued, “I love reading,” and “I like listening to audiobooks,” although her school textbooks have kept her from reading as much as she would like.

Angela chose her mother and grandmother as the two individuals who had the most influence on her desire to learn. “They were always very strong women. My mother especially taught me not to rely on anyone, whether it’s someone in the family or another person—to be able to support myself. She’s always been the person who supports everyone; I’ve turned into my mother. I know that the more education you have under your belt, the more of an asset you are, the better that you can provide for your family.”

Her experience with online learning so far has been positive. She enjoys AU’s platform, “because it’s so flexible.” She elaborated, “You’re given six months (or four months if you’re funded), and it’s up to you when you’re going to do your homework, when you’re going to submit your assignments, [and] when you’re going to write your exam. I’ve done online learning for my other courses; while they do have the same setup, they also had the deadlines that a physical university has. I did not like that at all ... I prefer it the way AU does it.” However, she wishes that “Athabasca

[University] would upgrade a little bit and implement some YouTube videos, recorded lectures, or more interactions rather than just giving you the physical textbook or the e-textbook.”

When asked about her tutors, she stated, “Some tutors have been better than others; some have been really helpful. They’re probably overworked, and can only respond to so many students. Others haven’t been so helpful.” She continued, “I’m definitely an independent learner, but when I do have questions, I can’t send an email or submit a request and then wait two [or] three days for a question to be answered. I’ve moved on.” However, she did mention some great experiences with some of her tutors, including some who are quite helpful on the Facebook groups as well.

Her most memorable course has been MATH100: Developmental Mathematics, even though Math and Algebra were not easy subjects for her. She stated, “I was ecstatic. It really boosted my confidence that I was understanding. I think I got an A.” She took the course prior to registering, and “it made me sign up for the certificate.” In addition, “That tutor was especially helpful.”

If she were the new president of AU, Angela stated that she “would market their product better.” She explained, “There is a lot of value behind what they do. I know that it could be a win-win, where they make a lot more money by expanding their programs, by pushing their marketing. A lot of people don’t know about AU, both in Canada and overseas, and there’s a lot of value there.” For example, she specifically mentioned risk management, which “is a very lucrative job and in demand in the insurance world,” especially now during COVID-19, as well as “other programs that are becoming the new norm.”

As for a famous person she would like to have lunch with, Angela chose Jen Siancero, author of *You Are a Badass: How to Stop Doubting Your Greatness and Start Living an Awesome Life*. “She explains it in such a down to earth way, that if you pay attention, it really does change you ... We all have problems and our crosses to bear ... She’s probably the reason why I’ve made a few changes in my life. I’m usually the type to sit there and carefully analyze before making any decisions ... but when I did need to make some changes, I needed that push ... [I came to the] realization that, if you don’t jump, you’re not going to fly.” The lunch would be Caprese salad and seafood delicacies with a nice white wine, “on a beach in Tolo ... while enjoying the sunshine.” In addition, she just downloaded a new audiobook called *The Game of Life and How to Play It* by Florence Scovel Shinn, and she is currently watching anything that keeps her mind “off work or school,” including *The Good Life*.

To date, Angela’s most valuable lesson learned in life has been to “trust my gut and my abilities,” and her proudest moment has been “getting my certified insurance professional designation.” One thing that distinguishes her from other people is her “very dry and sarcastic [sense of] humour,” stating that she has “no mouth filter, which does not do well in the business world!”

As a final note, Angela “would like to urge other students to start writing for *The Voice*, and get more involved because, even though we’re online,” she stated, “if you don’t put yourself out there ... you do feel that isolation.” (Be sure to check out some of her recent columns about financial freedom and personal finances titled, “The Struggling Student Rants.”) She also mentioned the importance of (pre-COVID-19) AUSU Meet and Greets, which she attended this past November in Regina. She mentioned that it would be nice for these events to take place in other cities in addition to Edmonton and Calgary “to make people feel more connected.” (For students interested, AUSU now hosts Virtual Student Socials each month. Check the AUSU events page for more details.

Natalia Iwanek is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English at Athabasca University and is also a freelance editor and writer. She can be contacted at <https://www.nataliawanediting.com>.

The Struggling Student Rants The Matrix Resolutions

Angela Pappas



Every year, on December 31st, most of the planet celebrates a full spin around the sun. Nothing new about that. We also commemorate this full circle by making bold statements, both to ourselves and others. You can bet your bottom that this year we'll all quit smoking, lose the thirty pounds, walk out on the lukewarm or abusive relationship, and finally go back to school, so we can be the astronauts and ballet performers we've wanted to be since we were 10. We promise ourselves we're going to make the new year better than the last one and vow to change our lives—starting January 1st though, not now. It's no surprise that no one actually sticks to their resolutions; we read about this all the time, secretly pleased to find out we're not alone. Most of us have

already broken our 2021 vows by now, so don't feel too bad. "Some ice cream will cheer you up. After all, you only live once—we can try again next year." This is what my mini-me whispers to me, as she nonchalantly sits on my shoulders 24/7. What excuse does your alter-ego give to you?

Yet we continue to ring in the new year—every year—with impossible promises to ourselves, knowing very well that we are unlikely to change anything. I sometimes wonder whether we really want to change, or we just want to complain about what needs to change and use New Year's Eve as the channel to do so. Wanting to change your life, for the better, sounds perfectly reasonable. Allowing yourself only one chance a year to try sounds ludicrous to me.

My common sense tells me that, as all creatures are naturally averse to pain, we should try to change something at the exact moment we realize we are suffering. This makes more sense in my mind. When we step on a deck screw, we try to remove it immediately and run to the hospital for a tetanus shot. We don't walk around from June to December 31st with a screw firmly inserted into our heel and on New Year's Eve declare, "That's it, I've had it! I'm now ready to go to the ER tomorrow!" Yet, as irrational as we are, we choose to exist in situations which make us absolutely miserable, for an entire year, before trying to fix it. According to this bizarre logic, we must then wait until January 1st to refuse to be paraded through town, multiple times a year, on the cucking stool, or to have a hamburger. Meanwhile, here's another round of unflavoured protein shakes—on the house!

If you think I'm trying to be funny, you're wrong.

Entry of the Gladiators

Work is generally not fun—unless you're Elon Musk or Mark Zuckerberg. There can also be a lot of bad apples out there: the naysayers, the thunder-thieves, the playground bullies, and even the Mean Girls. We also shouldn't rush to call a place "toxic" if we've had a bad day, or week, or even month. If you've worked at your organization for a while, you've probably figured out if it's a

toxic one or not. However, if you're new to the job or have never personally dealt with a toxic work environment, it isn't always apparent from the start. I once landed myself in the middle of a Three Ring Circus, watching the ringmaster crack the whip and I swore I could hear Entry of the Gladiators in the background, all the while thinking "you can't make this shit up."

It was certainly entertaining for a while! Some signs of toxic work environments include unethical behaviour; management focusing only on mistakes; employees being bullied or left out of conversations; and employees being overworked or overburdened (Gillespie, 2017). If the naysayers and bullies outnumber the good people and permeate the entire organization then you need to put some sneakers on and run. Don't wait until New Year's Eve to declare you're going to look for different work; just pull that deck screw out of your heel for crying out loud before you end up amputating your foot.

You might also be trying to convince yourself that it's a tough job market and, besides, it's just work—you'll do your job for eight hours and clock out. But a toxic workplace can easily permeate into your personal life and cause severe trauma if not dealt with head on and right away. We put up with behaviour we would not normally accept from anyone else, by giving ourselves a false sense of security and declaring we'll move on next January 1st, we just need this year to get our ducks in a row. We subject ourselves to multiple forms of humiliation and degradation for good massage benefits and the promise of a pension. Besides, the cucking stool isn't that bad, right? Poor Jane—the temp—was just accused of being a witch. They couldn't afford to send her off to the asylum, due to budget cuts, so they just let her burn.

It Tastes Just like Mom's—Soul Crushing

If you've ever tried unflavoured protein, then you know you're not missing much. A few weeks of it straight and you'll soon be begging for Brussel sprouts, covered in chocolate, and sprinkled with sardine oil. Anything with flavour. The same holds true for our hearts and the boring, passionless, low-key miserable, non-existent relationships we have such a hard time breaking free from. At first we think they're not that bad; no relationship is perfect. Even Aladdin and Jasmine must've got into a rut eventually, or a squabble or two, once the magic carpet rides were over and someone had to wash the dishes. They have each other and that's what matters, as do you and your Jasmin. Plus, there's also Abu to think of—it would ruin him to have to

AU-thentic Events **Upcoming AU Related Events**

Bannock and a Movie January Edition: Our People will be Healed

Jan 1 to Jan 31

Online, Hosted by AU Nukskahtowin
indigenous.athabascau.ca/bannock/index.php
Access through above link

Learning to Learn Online MOOC

Jan 18 to Feb 21

Online, Hosted by AU and Contact North
news.athabascau.ca/events/learning-to-learn-online-athabasca-universitys-massive-open-online-course-winter-2021/
Register through above link

Talk to a Librarian Drop-in Session

Tues, Jan 19, 9:00 to 9:30 am MST
Online via Microsoft Teams
Hosted by AU Library
library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html
No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

AUSU January Council Meeting

Wed, Jan 20, 6:30 to 8:00 pm MST
Online, Hosted by AUSU
www.ausu.org/event/jan-2021-council-meeting/
No pre-registration required; email governance@ausu.org for meeting package

All events are free unless otherwise noted

deal with his parents' divorce and having to deal with Biff next door picking on him. The child will end up snorting cocaine and dissecting live animals in the basement! Soon enough, the world will have a Norman Bates to deal with, all because you wanted to find flavour in your life. Yeah, you'll think about it next year.

Day in and day out we promise ourselves we'll face the music in the new year, for now let's not stir the pot. The kids are still in school, the house hasn't sold yet, the assets are too complicated to split. Unflavoured protein is fine, let me just add some rum to that. We stumble around through life, not getting anywhere, catering to everyone's wants, needs, and tastes. We don't realize, however, that we eventually end up bitter and cruel, resentful of the sacrifices we made. We tell ourselves the sacrifices were for them. They weren't; that's the lie we tell ourselves when we're just scared of what's on the other side. Happiness, perhaps. I guess we'll find out next year, right?

This year, let's not stick to New Year's resolutions or wait until December 31st comes around again. I challenge all AU students to, instead, remind themselves where they want to be in 5 years and... *You thought I was going to say work on the dream a little bit every day right?* No. I double-dare you to hit the fast-forward button. Don't think about it, just do it. Double your normal course load. Cut your grocery budget in half and save the rest. Apply for CEO, even if you're front-line. Take the job in New Zealand! Don't think about it or overanalyze it. Don't think about the how, what, when, where, and so on. Just do it, like Nike taught us! The worst that could happen is you change your trajectory.

References

Gillespie, D. (2017). *Taming Toxic People: The Science of Identifying and Dealing with Psychopaths at Work & at Home*. Pan Macmillan Australia.

Angela Pappas is a part-time AU Certificate student who enjoys learning and discussing anything personal finance and personal development related.

More AU-Thentic Events

Faculty of Business Undergrad Program Orientation for New Students

Thur, Jan 21, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MST
Online
Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
news.athabascau.ca/events/faculty-of-business-undergraduate-program-orientation-for-new-students-20210121/
RSVP through above link

Will mentorship get me a job?

Thur, Jan 21, 1:00 to 2:00 pm MST
Online
Hosted by AU, RBC, and Ten Thousand Coffees
news.athabascau.ca/events/will-mentorship-get-me-a-job/
Register through above link

Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) Info Session

Thur, Jan 21, 3:00 to 4:00 pm MST
Online
Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
news.athabascau.ca/events/doctorate-in-business-administration-dba-information-session-20210121/
RSVP through above link

Talk to a Librarian Drop-in Session

Thur, Jan 21, 3:00 to 3:30 pm MST
Online via Microsoft Teams
Hosted by AU Library
library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html
No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

The Grad Lounge

Fri, Jan 22, 1:00 to 2:00 pm MST
Online via Microsoft Teams
Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies
fgs.athabascau.ca/news/events/index.php
No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted



Fly on the Wall Making a Mess

Jason Sullivan



Expressing Our New Year's Resolutions in a New Way

This year, why not try finger painting your New Year's resolutions? While written lists of goals can obscure raw intentions, the tactile nature of hand paint can get us in touch with our primal natures. Multiple senses are stimulated when we paint by touch. As the paint oozes and traces from fingers to paper, and spreads from our personal palm print to our chosen canvas, the gooey mess may serve to express some untold personal truths. And if you don't wear a smock you might even get a new t shirt design out of the deal.

Words claim a solidity that belies their limits; whereas images depict deeper points about where we're at in our being. The towering philosophic figure Johann Wolfgang von Goethe claimed that "we should talk less and draw more. I personally would like to renounce speech altogether and, like organic nature, communicate everything I have to say in sketches" (Goethe in 247). Enter a little free play with finger paint and you might exit the January a happier student.

The Dodo and the Devil in the Details

Too often in AU student life our results come in the form of written text. Pragmatic though language be, when we wonder why New Years resolutions feel so contrived and hollow, it may be that they don't get at what really moves our heart. Even when resolutions succeed, as I find they can when they're dolloped out with an avid dose of realism, the rushing joy of success says more about our emotions than the fact that we succeeded at a concrete goal. Painting our intentions gives us new insights about what we mean when we make a literal claim; "in fact," writes Stephen Jay Gould, "iconography offers precious insight into modes of thinking that words often mask or ignore-precisely because we tailor our words so carefully but reveal our secrets unconsciously in those 'mere' illustrations" (Gould, 428). What we create, be it an image or just some squiggles, says much about our inner state.

Even rabidly literalist depictions express sentiments, be they wistful and morose, or gleeful and ebullient. Images may not speak a perfect symphony, but they do say more than they at first appear to. Take the humble dodo, buried forever by the tragedy of extinction. "Have you ever seen a dodo pictured as anything other than alone and forlorn, although they once abounded on Mauritius? The classic dodo reconstruction shows a single bird dominating the foreground of a desolate terrain. For the dodo is both a large flightless pigeon and our conventional metaphor for extinction" (Gould, 428). As we finger paint we just might see something in our feelings that we hadn't clarified in words. Resolutions that say what they mean elide the meanings they say by the mere act of their creation; we at once mean more and less than what we say because every sentence shears away all but the few syllables it reveals out of the vast inland sea of our pre-

symbolic mind. Remember, most of our thoughts exist prior to the process of putting them into words. Finger paint allows us to express the symbols we didn't know we had.

Take weight loss for instance, the mere fact that it's a topic of concern to a person suggests insecurity about their health, sensuality, or longevity. The latter is a universal concern; mortality is the great unknown that begins every New Year. Is this the end? It could be. Time's halt lurks ever over the horizon, like a Komodo dragon in some shadowy nightmare. Yet, it doesn't have to be that way. Remember, resolutions are promises we make about our future self and, to paraphrase the famous aphorism, we need not ruminate about the past because we don't live there anymore. Future goals say more about our past states of mind than we may realize. Resolutions thereby demand that our future self hold to promises made by another self, our past self. But creations we paint (or draw, or compose with an instrument or as a freeform poem) are timeless in that they involve limited preparation and hold no meaning mapped onto a larger narrative. We only have the present to live and perhaps the ultimate New Year's resolution is to treat the present as a playful gift, something finger painting is great at helping us to realize. The future is unknown and the best laid goals remain uncertain.

In Every Saying Lurks the Times We Inherit

Whether we say our resolutions in words, write them as a list, or dabble them in playdough, the meaning of our being is inexorably bound up with our modern cultural zeitgeist. Consider how familiar this 1762 statement by Age of Enlightenment giant Jean-Jacques Rousseau reads: "Our popular languages have become perfectly useless to us as eloquence has. Societies have assumed their final form: nothing is in them any longer changed except by arms and cash, and as there is no longer anything to say to the people but give money, it is said to them with placards at street corners or by soldiers in their homes; it is not necessary to assemble anyone for this: on the contrary, the subjects have to be kept scattered; this is the first maxim of modern politics." (Rousseau in Derrida 150).

Resolutions are essentially akin to monetary exchanges in that we believe that a series of actions will yield a predictable reward. Even when we mean what we say and have the best of intentions for our future selves, the meanings we ascribe to our life are part of a larger social reality, one that is isolated, individualistic, and tending to blame victims for their challenges. In other words, the idea that we as individuals should make resolutions at all puts the burden of change on our own actions rather than on asking us to think about the world and realize just how much of our emotional state is dependent upon cultural expectations that we've learned to internalize. A few messy finger-paintings might set us straight!

If there's one thing at AU that doesn't work as a resolution or at any time in our study schedule, to this *Fly on the Wall*, it's affixing guilt and undue pressure onto the accomplishment of one's coursework. And that's why, this year, I've fingerpainted my New Year's goals like an innocent chimp. Because if we get in touch with our inner child and our natural longing for learning and betterment and growth, we will have accomplished the greatest development of all. We'll have resolved ourselves into the best version of ourselves there's yet been. May 2020 bring success and fulfillment to us all!

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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.



Why We Should Exercise in the Woods

Marie Well



Have you heard of the Japanese therapy called forest bathing? Forest bathing (spending time in the forest) can ease stress, make us happier, boost our immune systems, spike our creativity, and, oh, so much more. But there's something even better than forest bathing, far more rejuvenating. The ultimate bliss, at least in my opinion, comes from not bathing in the woods, but exercising.

If you ever rode a bicycle like it was our car, you may have loved the moving scenery, the passing trees, even being in the midst of traffic. But the moving scenery in the woods is a hundred times more exhilarating. And you don't necessarily need to be in a forest; a heavily wooded area, preferably with varying slopes, will do.

While jogging in the woods, lungs fill up with fresh air and scents of cedar and pine. Find a heavily populated span of pine trees and it's good to rush over there to exercise the abdominal muscles. Breathe in the rich sugary sweetness,

the honey-like succulence, of pine scents, scents that may have never been truly savored before. When experiencing that intensity of real pine for the first time, our bodies can tingle, like children eating their first gumdrops.

When training outdoors, choirs of birds' chirps echo throughout the woods, their songs so delightful they warm the heart. We might even wonder if the chirps are somehow tied to us, at least in the birds' conscious awareness of our presence. And if we have the ability to whistle, we, too, may join their choir.

If snow fills the terrain, we can do ab work on the dry grass under a tree. And, oh, do trees give off a beautiful vibe, something we may not be expecting. Looking up at a tree, as we exercise our abs, we see the pine leaves and branches almost reaching out to us, eagerly seeking our carbon dioxide breath, which trees love. In those moments, we are no longer separate from the tree, we are one with nature. Doing abs under a tree feels like being wrapped in the blanket of the tree's branch-like arms.

As well, the vitamin D from the sunshine nourishes, protecting us from diseases such as breast cancer or the flu. And the sunlight lifts the spirit, freeing our minds from every trouble.

After running and doing abs and calisthenics for forty minutes, we can wind down with a stretch. Stretch under the woods to feel the bond, again, with the trees. Your endorphins, at this point, should be peaking.

Follow up the stretch with the most delicious part, a ten-minute meditation. While meditating, mentally list off everyone we ever met, sending them love, whether they are friends, family, or foes. The high we feel from the endorphins released on the run, combined with this spiritual meditation, make for an ecstatic finale. This finale feels like existing with one foot inside heaven, the other on earth. Also, the body feels like the soul has expanded, so much so, that we are no longer physical beings, we are pure spirit.

And, oh, does food afterward taste terrific. A bite of baked yam wedges, doused in ketchup, ignites fireworks of endorphins. A tiny sip of espresso coffee, just a taste, feels like the earth has

moved, like an euphoric earthquake. A bite of dark chocolate tastes like an explosion of love gliding through our stomachs. I swear, food never before tasted so delicious.

When returning home, top the thrill with an ice-cold shower, which further expands the soul, separating the soul from the body, as our bodies lap up the icy water's health benefits. After the shower, put on a warm, fluffy sweater, and lie down for an elated nap. Goodnight, my nature loving friends. May exercise in the woods usher us to a state of bliss.

Homemade is Better Borscht

Chef Corey



I put a call out to my fellow writers to see who would be interested in a team up. Natalie responded and mentioned that she was looking into different cultures, one of them being the Ukraine. Our conversation turned into discussion about borscht! I don't know about you, but a good borscht is easy to make, and heats you up on those cold days. It has lots of great vegetables, and when simmered go a few hours the flavors just get better!

According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, Borscht originated in the Ukraine. It's also a popular dish in Russia and Poland. The original recipe used cow parsnip and it was changed to beets later. The beet is the reason the soup is so red in some pictures. My soup was more orange than red, but we all loved it! My littlest one had a couple helpings of it as well, which isn't abnormal for her, but she can be picky at times.

I chose to use canned beets, but raw beets would make this soup better. I highly recommend buying rubber gloves for this though. Really, I use

medical examining gloves quite often in the kitchen. They come in handy for recipes like borscht or when I'm working with raw meat. I digress, back to the beets. If you planted beets in your garden this year, here is one more recipe for you to use! If you choose to use raw beets, you're going to peel them and dice them into $\frac{1}{2}$ inch cubes. I'd use 3-4 large beets, as well. I also chose to use diced tomatoes, but you could use whole plum tomatoes, to remove the seeds.

When I think of borscht, I think of a hearty rustic soup. With chunks of vegetables and sour cream. A home cook could certainly get fancy and make all ingredients similar in size. Truthfully, having your ingredients similar in size will make cooking time more consistent. So, there is benefit in ensuring your dice everything the same size.

I hope you enjoy this soup as much as we do!



Borscht

Ingredients:

1 TBSP vegetable oil
2 carrots – peeled and diced
1 red onion – diced
2 celery stocks – diced
3 cloves of garlic – minced
3-4 large beets – peeled and diced OR 2 cans drained and diced
1 can of diced tomatoes – drained
1 can of tomato paste
3 – 4 russet potatoes – peeled and diced
½ a head of a small cabbage (1/4 if the cabbage is large) – sliced thinly into 1” strips
½ cup of red wine
1L beef stock (or water if you want to make this vegetarian)
2 tsp of parsley
2 tsp thyme
1 bay leaf
Salt and Pepper to taste
Sour cream (omit if you want this to be vegan)

Directions:

- 1) Prep all your ingredients.
- 2) Add the onion, garlic, and oil to a large pot and turn your heat onto high.
- 3) Stir the onions and garlic until they start to change color.
- 4) Add the celery and carrots and continue to sweat them.
- 5) Add a tsp of kosher salt (fine salt works too, you'll add less salt later though).
- 6) You're trying to add some browning to the bottom of the pot, stir occasionally so it doesn't burn the mirepoix (equal parts of carrots, onions, and celery is called mirepoix in French cooking).
- 7) Add the red wine and scrap the brown stuff off the bottom of the pot.
- 8) Add the beets, potatoes, tomatoes, tomato paste, beef stock, 1 tsp of ground pepper, parsley, thyme, and the bay leaf.
- 9) Bring to a boil, then turn the heat to low and let it simmer until the potatoes are softened, about 1 hour.
- 10) Remove the bay leaf and add the cabbage and cook for another 15 minutes until the cabbage softens.
- 11) Taste your awesome creation and add more salt and pepper if you think it needs it.
- 12) Add a dollop of crème sure and consume!



Chef Corey is a student in business management who first graduated from NAIT's Culinary Arts Program in 2007



What Self-Care Habits Should you Adopt in 2021?

Xine Xu



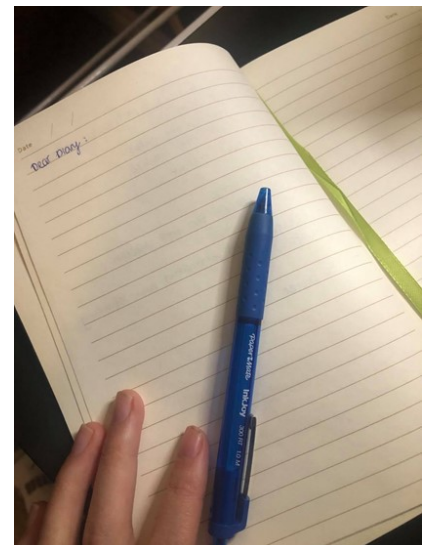
It's hard for many to believe that it has been nearly an entire year since the start of the global pandemic. On the top of many people's minds when the clock struck midnight on New Years' Eve is whether this year will be as bleak as the last. The combination of social distancing measures and overall economic and social changes brought by the pandemic has created a whirlwind of emotions for just about everyone. How can we better tackle the uncertainties of 2021? What are some ways we can better prepare ourselves mentally? I found that having a self-care routine has vastly improved my mental and physical health. It has created a sense of resiliency that will be valuable for my personal growth. The resilience mindset is a habit or lifestyle rather than an isolated event. Reinforcing positive self-care habits will go a long way regardless of where the pandemic takes us. So for me, here are five habits that have helped me through 2020, and will into 2021.

Journaling

One of the best ways to mentally detox is to jot your intimate thoughts on paper. Regardless of whether you are a writer or not, the physical act of putting pen to paper opens up our thoughts, hopes and fears. Even a short, ten-minute journaling session can reduce stress and improve your mood.

Meditate

While many sources refer to meditation as an excellent distressing tool, few blog posts share exactly how we can learn to meditate. I found that meditation is an art rather than an agenda item. Because it takes months and years to perfect this art, we become more mentally resilient over time. Starting with just a few minutes a day with apps like Headspace can go a long way. I found that since starting a meditation routine before bed, I have drastically improved my sleep routine.



Ten-minute workout routine

One of the most challenging goals I set for myself during 2020 was maintaining my physical health. Sadly, when our mental health takes a toll it can also impact our motivation levels to stay active. Ironically, working out also improves our mental health. I've often found the biggest hurdle was the thought of a long, dedicated workout. However, taking small steps with ten-minute cardio sessions will trick our brains into starting the activity rather than putting it off.

Bubble baths

If you think you're too old for bubble baths, think again! After consulting older peers working in highly stressful environments, one secret I've learned from their lifestyle is taking more regular bubble baths. In fact, visual cues (such as bubbles) that encourage

us to turn off our working mind and turn on our relaxation mind acts as a physical cue to rest and relax.

Eat a homemade breakfast

Starting the day on the right foot means treating ourselves in small ways such as making a hearty breakfast. This doesn't always mean a complex, gourmet meal that takes hours of preparation. In fact, something as simple as an egg omelet or breakfast sausage with pancakes can drastically improve our mood and motivate us to check more off the to-do list.

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



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

The sound of deadlines wooshing past: one student discovers the course enrolment deadline of the 10th doesn't have much flex (but students can enrol for the next month and still access course materials for a head start.)

Discord

The AU Students Discord channel has been popping with activity since its Sept 2020 inception. Didn't get the memo: One thread about the status of paper exams (apparently they're still off.) .

reddit

It's amazing this still gets asked, but one student wonders whether there will be any issue applying to a grad school with an AU bachelor degree; multiple responses indicate an emphatic "no".

Twitter

@austudentsunion tweets: "AU will likely decide in January how much to increase tuition for September '21. We will be continuing to advocate on students behalf, so we encourage students to take our quick poll! <https://ausu.org/2020/12/how-would-a-tuition-increase-at-athabasca-university-impact-you/> #StudentAdvocacy #canpse #AthaU."

@austudentsunion tweets: "In the spirit of inclusivity and support for our members, AUSU has launched a Discord Server for the #2SLGBTQIA+ community at @AthabascaU ! It is intended as a safe space for the community to find support, make friends, and chat. Visit <https://bit.ly/2KqfQVG> for more! #AthaU."



The Study Dude

The Art of Study Breaks

Marie Well



Breaks are vital for studying success. Two different approaches to study breaks can give us the most mileage.

Approach #1: The Recommended Break:

The first approach, which relies on using timers, is to study for 25 minutes straight and then take a 5-minute break. Do this two times in a row, totalling 50 minutes of study for a full 10 minutes of breaks.

But here's the clincher: after the third 25-minute study stint, take a 15-minute break.

Let me sum it up: for every 1 hour and 15 minutes of studies total we take 25 full minutes of breaks. This break structure will help refresh us, prepping us for greater focus during our next study stint.

My Breaks: A Case Study:

I did something similar during the undergrad,

with great success. I studied for 30 minutes straight and then took a 15-minute break. Doing this, I achieved a near perfect GPA, although I took only three courses a semester.

But in full-time grad studies, I switched to studying for a full hour and then took only a 5-minute break. These short breaks left me feeling exhausted and stressed, and my performance suffered.

Approach #2: A Switch Instead of a Break:

Here's an alternative system for those of us, busier than bees, who don't have time for breaks. Study for 30-minute stints, and then, for the next 30 minutes, switch subjects (say from math to English) or switch the activity (say from memorizing notes to writing an essay). And then, after the thirty minutes, return to the initial subject, and repeat.

A Caveat: Some of Us Don't Need Breaks:

I know one woman who never took breaks. She just got focused for hours on studies, only breaking for food and exercise. And she made it to the PhD level. But she's got a spirit and focus like the Energizer Bunny. Some of us might be able to flourish using her system, if we've got the drive.

What to Do on Breaks:

If you want some R&R on our breaks, here are some suggestions:

First, for every break, no matter how long or short the break may be, we should sip a glass of water. Water is calming and hydrates the body and brain. Water is nature's ultimate beverage, and it's free.

For 5-minute breaks, we at AU could do one of these suggested tasks:

- Look at a single Lynda.com video clip, preferably one that gives us an academic edge, a career boost, or an insight into an interest.

- Text loved ones, sending only loving words.
- Engage in a loving kindness meditation, even prayer, sending out warm thoughts to everyone we've encountered, while drumming up thoughts of gratitude toward our studies and tutors.

For 15-minute breaks, we could benefit from doing these next tasks:

- Eat healthy snacks that boost our energy, especially snacks that help replace the body's electrolytes. Electrolytes grow depleted when we expend energy. These snacks might include almonds, avocados, bananas, kale, oranges, or beans.
- Phone a loved one.
- Read several pages of an enjoyable book.
- Drink a cup of sugar-free tea or coffee. But if stress or anxiety are issues for us, stay clear of all caffeine, avoiding even decaf.
- Go outside and soak up the sunshine.

But what happens when we get into the work world, assuming we're not already there? Well, that's when switching subjects, or more appropriately, switching tasks, can add flavor to a break-free day. If we're up to the challenge, as AU students, why not try switching tasks instead of breaking? We may achieve a maximum effort day. With optimal effort, our potential for academic success has no limits.

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Terry Fox Humanitarian Award

Sponsored by: Terry Fox Humanitarian Award Program

Deadline: February 1, 2021

Potential payout: up to \$28,000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants; must be students graduating from high school, or completing first year of CEGEP, or already completed high school; be in good academic standing; and planning to or already studying toward their first university degree or diploma. See full [eligibility criteria](#).

What's required: An online applicant form, including contact info for three referees, an unofficial academic transcript, and detailed information relating to your voluntary humanitarian activities.

Tips: Make sure you allow enough time for your referees to complete their forms by the deadline.

Where to get info: terryfoxawards.ca/





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Hospital Hospitality

Dear Barb:

Happy New Year! I sure hope this is a better year than last year. My situation may be a common one considering all that is going on in the hospitals this year. My father has been in the hospital since before Christmas. Thankfully, he doesn't have COVID, but he does have several other illnesses. Dad has a heart condition, COPD, and he is in the early stages of MS. Mom and I have done everything possible to keep him out of the hospital because of all the COVID outbreaks there, but ultimately we had no choice. He can only have one visitor because of COVID--my mom, of course.

But this has been very hard on her. I wish I could do something to give her a break. She doesn't want to leave dad alone for very long, so she spends most of her time at the hospital with him. I am worried that she'll end up sick as well, as this is taking a toll on her and she is in her late sixties. I want to find a way to support my parents and I was wondering if you would have any suggestions that could help. I tried to research myself, but there is so much conflicting information and I am finding it difficult to focus. Looking forward to your response.

Thanks, Ellen.

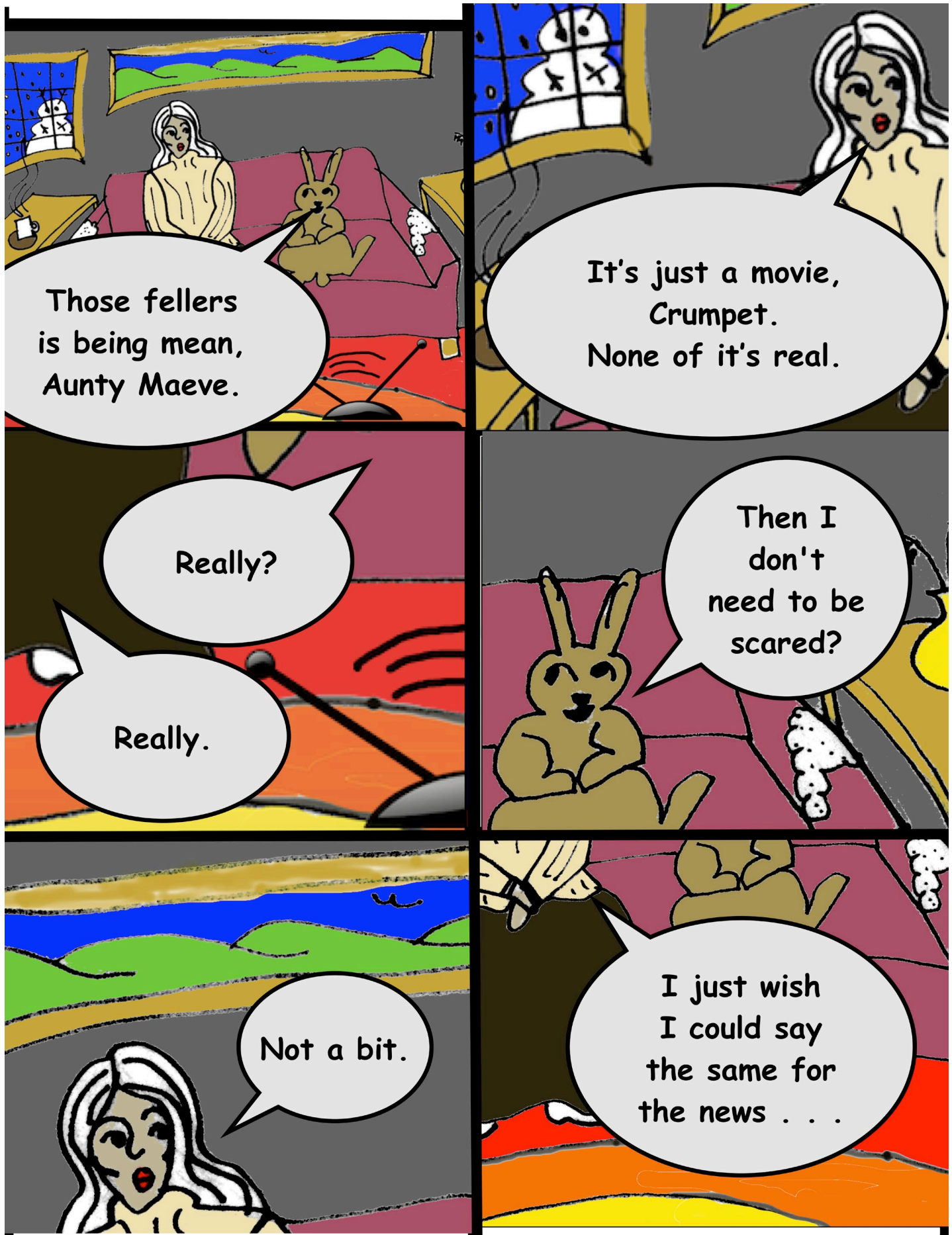
Happy New Year Ellen:

Glad to hear from you, but sad about what you are going through. I will try to clear up some of your confusion. I don't know whether your dad has a cell phone and is able to video chat with you or other family members. If your mother doesn't have a phone either, I would suggest you and your mom purchase phones for them both. Monthly plans can be expensive, but well worth the investment for everyone involved.

Hospital staff are saying that communicating with other family members is critical at this time, when people are isolated and feeling alone. Also, you need to designate one family member who will be able to share your dad's situation with everyone. You would be the most likely person to advocate for your dad, and communicate with his doctors, as long as your parents provide consent for you to be able to obtain this information. Establish a connection with one professional health care contact who will communicate with others involved in your father's care and will keep you updated on your dad's situation. It is a difficult time and I hope this information is helpful. Looking forward to a better year ahead.

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
No Fear**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 with any questions about this article.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Jan 15: [Feb degree requirements deadline](#)
- Jan 20: [AUSU Public Council Meeting](#)
- Jan 30: [Deadline to apply for course extension for Mar](#)
- Feb 10: [Deadline to register in a course starting Feb 1](#)
- Feb 11: [AUSUnights Virtual Student Social](#)
- Feb 15: [Mar degree requirements deadline](#)

New AU Phone Line Hours

Athabasca University has now resumed telephone service for students! AUSU has been actively [advocating to the University](#) about activating the phone lines and providing further student supports since the Spring, so we are happy to see this launched.

The phone service hours are **Monday-Friday from 10:00am to 12:00pm, and 1:00pm to 3:00pm MST.**

Call 1-800-788-9041 to reach AU during Phone Service Hours.

There are also numerous places to find answers online:

- [Help & Support](#) (info on AU services)
- [AskAU](#) (FAQ's)
- [COVID-19 Q&A Page](#)
- [Health and Wellness Portal](#)

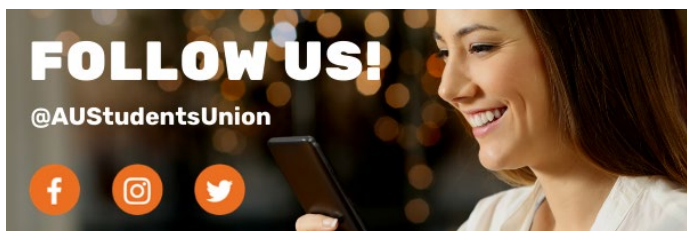
Find out more about the phones [here](#).



Follow Us!

Want updates on resources, events, and resources available to you as an AU student?

Follow us at @AUSStudentsUnion!



Free Resume Review

AUSU has teamed up with VMock Inc. to provide our members with FREE access to the VMock web-based [resume review platform](#)!

VMock is a SMART platform that provides instant personalized feedback on your resume to help you get an amazing resume incorporating global best practices.

Use the VMock platform to:

- Get an objective score on your resume benchmarked against thousands of resumes.
- Assess how well you have marketed your core competencies
- Receive personalized feedback line-by-line on aspects that recruiters focus on.
- Improve your resume using targeted recommendations on over 100 critical parameters
- Ensure your resume is a fit for your target career.
- Re-upload or rescore your resume to see your increased score!

Sign Up Now!

How to get started:

1. [Sign up for VMock](#)
2. Once you receive the approval email, follow the link and click "Login".
3. Upload your resume in PDF format and get started!

For more info visit the AUSU [website](#).



CLASSIFIEDS

Classifieds are free for AU students!
Contact voice@voicemagazine.org for more information.

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