

# CEDAR SENTINEL



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# EDITOR MESSAGES

ALANNAH  
TJHATRA

EDITOR IN  
CHIEF



Hi Kingsway!

Welcome to April's issue of the Cedar Sentinel; I hope everyone has made it through this month alright -- not too many mishaps or hard times, I hope -- but then again, let's be real (I mean, on top of everything else, we had a rain/snow/ice storm and I slipped outside at least 547201857832 times.)

The thing is, life wasn't meant to be smooth all the time. A Bruce Lee quote goes: "Do not pray for an easy life; pray for the strength to endure a difficult one."

We often complain about the struggles of life. We ask God things like, "Why can't my life be less stressful?" or "Why did that have to happen? Everything was going so well..." or "Why did I have to slip 547201857832 times in the last week?"

But the truth is, life will never be easy. It's always going to be filled with trials and tests and situations that make you want to curl up in a ball under a blanket and blind yourself to your troubles. There will always be battles we have to fight. We cannot go through it saying, "Why can't life be easier?" -- because it can't. Have you ever looked back at your life -- all the situations you've been in -- and seen how far you've come, how much you've grown?

All the things you've gone through have made you the person you are today. And oftentimes, you are *stronger*.

So yes, there will always be mountains to climb. There will always be hurdles to jump. There will always be monsters to face. There will always be \*insert generic metaphor about conquering your struggles\*. So instead of asking God for an easier life whenever you're going through something tough, ask Him for the *strength* to get through the difficult times. He will always be there to guide you.

Alannah Tjhatra

KACEY  
MORGAN

ASSISTANT  
EDITOR



Hi!

So I know we're all kind of mad about the fact that even though it's spring... it's not really spring. Hopefully this month's edition of our school newspaper can lift your spirits, as we have put together a nice helpful collection of articles. And we always like to take constructive criticism so if you have any ideas on how to make the newspaper more enjoyable, just send us an email at either: [kaceymorgan@kingsway.college](mailto:kaceymorgan@kingsway.college) or [alannahtjhatra@kingsway.college](mailto:alannahtjhatra@kingsway.college).

Kacey Morgan

# PRIZE WINNERS

Congratulations to Sandrine Adap, Curtly Newland, and John Reyes for winning March's contest! Be sure to check the Cedar Sentinel for future contests, games, and draws.



# APRIL CONTEST

Caption the below photo and send it to [cedar.sentinel@gmail.com](mailto:cedar.sentinel@gmail.com). Your Cedar Sentinel editors will choose the top three best captions, and you will win a prize if you are one of the three people whose caption was chosen. Enjoy!





# THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT



*The Butterfly Effect: the theory that a single occurrence can change the course of the rest of your life.*

April showers bring may flowers. there's something about the rain that gives me a sense of peace. (it also makes me lazy and hungry.) anyway, it's been awhile since i last wrote for this paper. at this point in time, you've experienced & pulled through about 78% of what life has had to throw at you this school year. congratulations, you're almost there. every choice you've ever made this year has brought you to this point, so think about it; what were those choices? are you happier? sadder? maybe you've kept it consistent & you feel neutral, just chilling.

*the butterfly effect: the theory that a single occurrence can change the course of the rest of your life.*

no, i'm not talking about the song by travis scott. if you think about it, it's actually a crazy idea. the smallest decisions in your life can affect the rest of your life. should you eat cereal or oatmeal for breakfast? does it matter? actually, maybe. all of us are trying to just get through it and live a good, happy life. how do we even get there if we

have no idea where our choices will take us in the future? in the beginning of this paper i talked about two emotions and one type of action; consistency. i've come to the conclusion that that's the answer. without consistency in your life, it's basically a mess. & no, i'm not telling you to practice the same routine every single day for the rest of your life just to be safe. you don't need to eat cereal every morning in fear that if you eat oatmeal, your future will automatically change. i definitely encourage you to take risks. just think smarter.

one thing i've learned so far this year is that you have to carefully choose the things you can be consistent with. money? if you're earning it smoothly, then keep it going. friends? don't change up on the ones you know would never change up on you. school? This should be a routine, no question. things like wanting better for yourself and being kind; these things should be consistent. if you feel like you've been consistent this year, props to you, g. if not, it's never too late to uphold some new strategies, especially if it benefits you.

before i end this, think about the things that worry you. is it worth it? my closest friends have always told me, "if it's not going to matter in 5 years, don't spend 5 minutes worrying about it." in other words, if it doesn't benefit you in the long run, don't even stress it, sis. your time is too precious; choose the things you want/need to be worrying about. with the big decisions you come across for the rest of this year, think about what it will do for you in the future. with the small decisions (cereal or oatmeal) don't hang around the indecisiveness that surrounds the ideas of your choice in breakfast, but think about the butterfly effect.

you deserve the best, so give yourself the best & keep it consistent. may april (see what i did there, lol, i reversed it. 'cause april then may, but I put may before april) bring you everything you need to face the rest of the 22% of whatever it is that comes your way for the rest of this school year. you got this. ■

*note: it is the writer's preference to have no capital letters.*



# THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY

Family--they're the people who you're stuck with forever. They are the people who make you laugh, cry, and build your character and sense of self. When you're born, you are literally a blank canvas for your parents to paint. Some are more heavily-handed than others, some have more direction with their brush, some are lost and learn along the way. Many of our parents are people we truly trust and confide in, while some of us feel alienated to

speaking to them at all. The family unit is also an important factor when we speak to them at all. Heavenly Father. They have the responsibility of being the representation of the other men we seek for in our lives (for the girls out there.) Not all of us have the privilege of knowing our fathers, and many of the ones who are present in the lives of their children hinder their growth and development in life. The role of a father is to hold the household together-- to be accountable for their sons and teach them to be noble men, and to dote on, and love, their daughters, and to show their children



that they are beautiful and strong. Although they don't necessarily play a huge role in the physical development of a follicle in the uterus during the ovarian cycle (Bio 12 jargon), a child's mind is greatly affected by the men in their lives.

Fathers are to follow the example of Christ and shepherd their family

and love. A mother's love for her children cannot be quantified or understood. It's a primal feeling, an instinctual reflex to protect and nurture their young. Mothers are to teach their daughters to be proper women, they are there to be a support and cheerleader for their sons. Being the second pillar of the home



in the right way. They also have to check themselves with the "righteousness ruler" that the Bible provides -- and as they correct themselves, their family, as an extension of them, will follow suit.

Mothers also play a major role. Apart from bringing their children into the world at the price of hours of pain, they are the source of affec-

tion on an equal stance with the father, they are relied upon by the whole family. The mother is the safety net that everyone in the family relies on for affection and love.

Children also have a role that is just as important. They are to obey and listen to their parents, but reason with them as well. Even children can be teachers to their paren-

tal figures.

The importance of a family is crucial to connecting to God. All of the promises that are stated in the Bible from listening to your parents are evident. All of these things make the family a huge target for the Enemy to try and strike it out. Losing the father, who is to be a mirror of Christ, knocks down a pillar. Removing the mother creates a void of love that is needed in the early stages of life -- another pillar destroyed. Sons and daughters who do not respect their parents, and consequently lose the blessings that would have been showered on them, wipes out the last column that holds the house up.

All of this is to say that being connected to your family is intrinsically all part of God's master plan to adhere us to Him. There are many failed families, either caused by outer or inner variables, and this makes it harder for the individuals to have a relationship with God. A Christian should know that family is not only a blood connection between people, but a direct cable line to God.

So while you walk down the Kingsway halls, try and pray for your family. Remember to bless your mom and dad, care for your sister and support your brother. It will be very rewarding in the end. ■

*"As for me & my house, we will serve the LORD."*





# THE SECRET GARDEN BANQUET

On April 8, 2018, students crowded into the beautifully transformed Kingsway cafeteria for the 2018 Kingsway Banquet themed, “The Secret Garden.” I assumed the banquet theme was loosely based on the inspiring children’s novel, *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett. Many of the 2018 Kingsway Banquet attendees wore winsome, spring-themed formal wear to pleasantly match the theme, even though the weather outside did not reflect the spring weather.

The usually mundane entrance to the cafeteria from the girl’s dorm was completed with an elegant entranceway with artistic vines twirling around the black columns. There was a fake white lamp post outside as well. After entering the cafeteria from the girl’s dorm entrance, there was a park bench and yet another lamp post for aesthetic and useful purposes. Other props included a fake pond and a mini rowboat by the regular Kingsway cafeteria entrance.

From my recollection of reading *The Secret Garden* years ago, there wasn’t a rowboat in the secret garden, but it was an adorable decoration.

The cafeteria lights were dimmed and the walls were covered with black material to transform the Kingsway cafeteria into a banquet-worthy setting. The cafeteria tables and chairs were covered in ebony-black cloth. On the tables, there were gold-coloured plates as well as thoughtfully-wrapped cutlery held in a ring decorated with a pink paper butterfly. In the middle of every table, there was a terrarium-like container filled partially with water. Floating on the water was a delicate flower that would glow and change colour at specific times. The attention to detail at this banquet was intriguing. There was a row of connected tables where the palatable food would be served that was covered with a black tablecloth as well. In the far corner of the Kingsway cafeteria, there was a circular table that was reserved for a variety of juices

and water. On that table, there were graceful lights that contributed to the calming theme. Around the cafeteria, there were other decorative lights as well. There was also a stage set up with two strategically arranged balloon columns at each side. Behind the stage was a lighter cloth, so that the natural sunlight from the outside could shine through for us to see the performers.

The stylish attendees of the 2018 Kingsway Banquet were given a white paper program of the talented performers who were going to sing or play an instrument. There were a group of talented performers who sang Disney songs or medleys, while others sang popular contemporary songs, while still other performers played instruments or performed their own compositions. It was invigorating to witness some of the Kingsway students showcase their numerous talents that aren’t heard or seen every day. The program included a thank you

section at the back dedicated to all the SA members and students who graciously assisted with the banquet preparations.

For the banquet food, we were served mashed potatoes with an assortment of sauces to choose from, delightful sauteed green beans, the classic dinner roast, and healthy salad with different choices of dressing. There were even seconds left over for those who wanted a bit

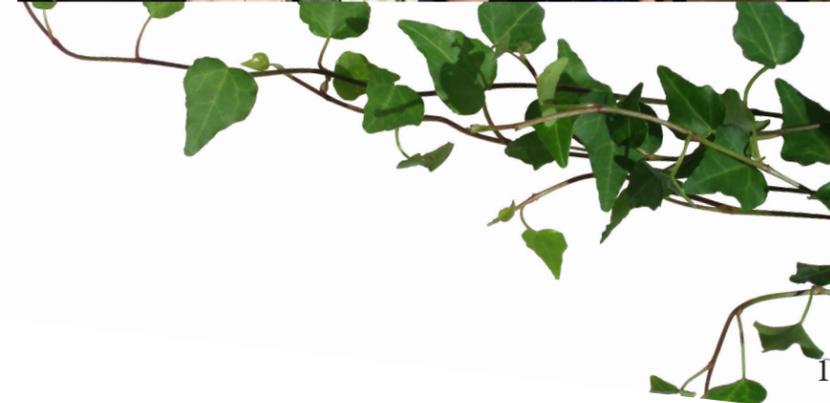
more. We lined up at the connected table line with the plethora of dishes and were wonderfully served by the prudent SA members. For dessert, we were served a large, delectable cinnamon bun.

Near the end of the banquet, the banquet attendees sang the “We Thank You Our Friends” song. It’s a song the choir members learned and sang whenever they went to different establishments and were

served excellent meals. After banquet ended, the attendees took group pictures inside the cafeteria before the decorations had to be taken down, or outside with their friends. The 2018 Kingsway “Secret Garden Banquet” was a lovely experience and I’m excited to see what next year’s banquet is going to be like. ■

## BANQUET PHOTOS

*Thank you to Madison Chant, Anna Flores, and Kimberly Junsay for the submission of these photos.*







# ABUNDANCE

a·bun·dance

/ə'bʌndəns/

noun

noun: **abundance**; plural noun: **abundances**

a very large quantity of something.

"the tropical island boasts an **abundance of** wildlife"

- the quantity or amount of something, e.g., a chemical element or an animal or plant species, present in a particular area, volume, sample, etc.  
"estimates of abundance of harp seals"
- (in solo whist) a bid by which a player undertakes to make nine or more tricks.
- the state or condition of having a copious quantity of something; plentifulness.

"vines and figs grew **in abundance**"

*synonyms:* profusion, plentifulness, profuseness, copiousness, **amplitude**, lavishness, bountifulness, **bounty**; **More** host, **cornucopia**, riot; **plenty**, quantities, scores, **multitude**; *informal* millions, **sea**, ocean(s), **wealth**, lot(s), heap(s), mass(es), stack(s), pile(s), load(s), buttload(s), bags, mountain(s), ton(s), **slew**, **scads**, **oodles**, gobs; *vulgar slang* assload(s); *formal* **plenitude**

"the abundance of donated funds was completely unexpected"

*antonyms:* **lack**, **scarcity**

- plentifulness of the good things of life; prosperity.  
"the growth of industry promised wealth and abundance"

The thing you take for granted, someone else is praying for."

Upon hearing this statement for the first time, I can

say that I truly was compelled. Every day, we hear the same complaints: "I hate school," "Breakfast was gross," "I have so much homework," -- I

know you've heard it all. But have we really come to realize what we're saying?

Being raised in North America, we've become so blinded to the fact that we have an abundance of blessings. We've acquired these 'first-world glasses' that only allow us to see what we DON'T have, as opposed to what we've already got. Even the hashtag *#firstworldproblems* has been trending, basically exploiting the 'issues' we face living in first world countries -- sometimes posts include a tenth broken iPhone charger or a broken shellac nail. Seriously? Is this really considered a struggle?

Materialism in Canada and the U.S. has gone out of hand. Everyone wants the next big thing: the newest MacBook, the finest car, the freshest shoes. These are JUST materials. Are they going to help you become a better person? No. Are they going to build your self-esteem? Maybe. This being said, our generation has narrowed down our concerns to only OURSELVES. We are a selfish generation. It's about "me, me, me." We want everyone to look at us, we are greedy, and we crave for everything to revolve around our desires. We've acquired egotistical mindsets and live in a covetous society, and this must change.

When you say you hate school, at that same moment, somewhere else, a young child's only wish is to be allowed to attend a school. You have the privilege of going to school, a chance to go to college and obtain a career. You HAVE the opportunity to go to school. You HAVE the privilege to work, to support yourself and your future.

As humans, we naturally have a void to fill in our lives. When we have so many items to fill that space, we feel less and less the need for God. The world can only offer so much, but can it give you eternal life? Will it give you infinite joy? Will it save you? Will it accept you regardless of all the bad things you've ever done?

Only you can answer that question.

There's a reason why the Seventh-Day Adventist message is becoming more and more accepted in developing countries. Those people know that if they have Jesus in their hearts, they already have everything. So why don't we see it the same way?

Even the Bible is taken for granted. In some countries, groups of people defy traditional laws and worship faithfully in hiding -- risking their lives in order to spend just a few hours with Jesus. In Canada, we literally have unrestricted access to

God's Word -- the secrets to success in life when we follow Jesus -- but when was the last time you picked yours up to really understand what He was trying to tell you?

Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that it's bad to have material things. It's like saying that money is bad. Money is not bad; it's necessary for life. But the love of money can be dangerous when it becomes obsessive, as well as the love and

“We are a selfish generation.  
It's about “me, me, me.”  
We want  
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to look at us,  
we are  
GREEDY,  
and we crave for everything to  
revolve around  
OUR DESIRES.”

priority you put on all your stuff.

In Luke 12:15, Jesus advises His disciples not to live a life of covetousness, "for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

If we look for our joy in something that is not eternal, we will never get that joy. We keep seeking worth in items -- but when that thing gets old and there's something new, we'll want that instead, and it's

going to be 'out with the old.' It will become a cycle of dissatisfaction. God is forever -- He's been here for you from the very beginning, and He promised that He will never leave you. God can give you so much if you make the decision to accept Him. He will give you the joy that you're looking for.

So, the next time you're going to whine about something - THINK before you speak. Stop looking for reasons to be unhappy. You are exceedingly blessed. Be grateful, appreciate what you possess, and grasp the opportunities that are given to you. It may be difficult to let go, and God will understand that. Pray about it. God has the power to set you free from the chains that materials have wrapped around you. What this world can offer is minuscule compared to what God has planned.

Set yourself apart from others in this world.

"...and do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

- Romans 12:2.

God opens doors for you to walk in them, not just so you can try to find another way around. ■





# THE NEED FOR PURPOSE

Having a purpose in life is much more than simply doing things for a reason. All of us go through our day and just do things because we are told to, or it because seems like the easy, safe way to get through life -- but one will never know his or her true purpose if they do not first search themselves for their deepest wants and desires. A purpose is what we need to be truly happy with what we do on a day-to-day level. If we pour all of our energy into things that we don't truly want, then we will never be happy or content with the life that we live. One cannot simply copy another person's lifestyle and expect to be truly happy. Happiness comes from within when we find ourselves doing

what really gives us purpose. This is specifically important for any Kingsway student because of the amount of repetition we find ourselves in throughout our day-to-day life. It is easy to get caught up in the homework of the Kingsway lifestyle while we are here and forget all about what originally made us so happy and content with our lives.

Always save some time for yourself, whether it is right before you go to bed, or right after school -- or even in the mornings before school. Living out the same day as the one before can cause anyone to lose touch with their true self. The dictionary's definition for purpose is "one's intention or objective." There is a purpose for everything, but what is your purpose? What are your intentions and objectives for everything you do? Well, that is for you to find out. How do we go on living without knowing why we do what we do? Without this, there is no point -- life is meaningless. God is the one who directs each and every one of our lives; He is the one who gives us all a purpose,



so all we have to do is let Him direct every aspect of our life for the greatest possible outcome. In this, we will find a purpose given to us by God. One cannot simply find his or her own purpose; one must rely fully on God for this. We live in a Christian atmosphere here at Kingsway, but that doesn't mean that we live a life with a purpose driven by God. Your location has no effect on how you choose to live your life...in the end, it is all your choice to have a life driven by a desire for something more.

Chase your dreams, because Kingsway life doesn't last forever -- this is a mere stage in our life

that will affect how we go into the real world. Try to accomplish your goals and to stand tall in a crowd of your peers. Make yourself known and never be afraid to do exactly what you believe is supposed to be done. The greatest thing you have to offer the world is your effect on others; never grow away from who you really are, no matter how tough life gets. The more you believe in yourself and your own actions, the more chance you will have of following through with your intentions and goals in life. Always be true to yourself and do not let people get in the way of what you really want to be. The only person

who can really hold you back from following through with your purpose is yourself. Never let the people who come through your life for a short period of time dictate how your life will play out because, in the end, you are the only one who will always be there for you. Happiness comes from a life fulfilled by your own specific purpose. The question still remains: will you make yourself known in this life, or will you be one of the billions of people who go through life and die without fulfilling a purpose? Every life has a purpose.

Yours is your own to find. ■

EMILY  
KUCHURIVSKI

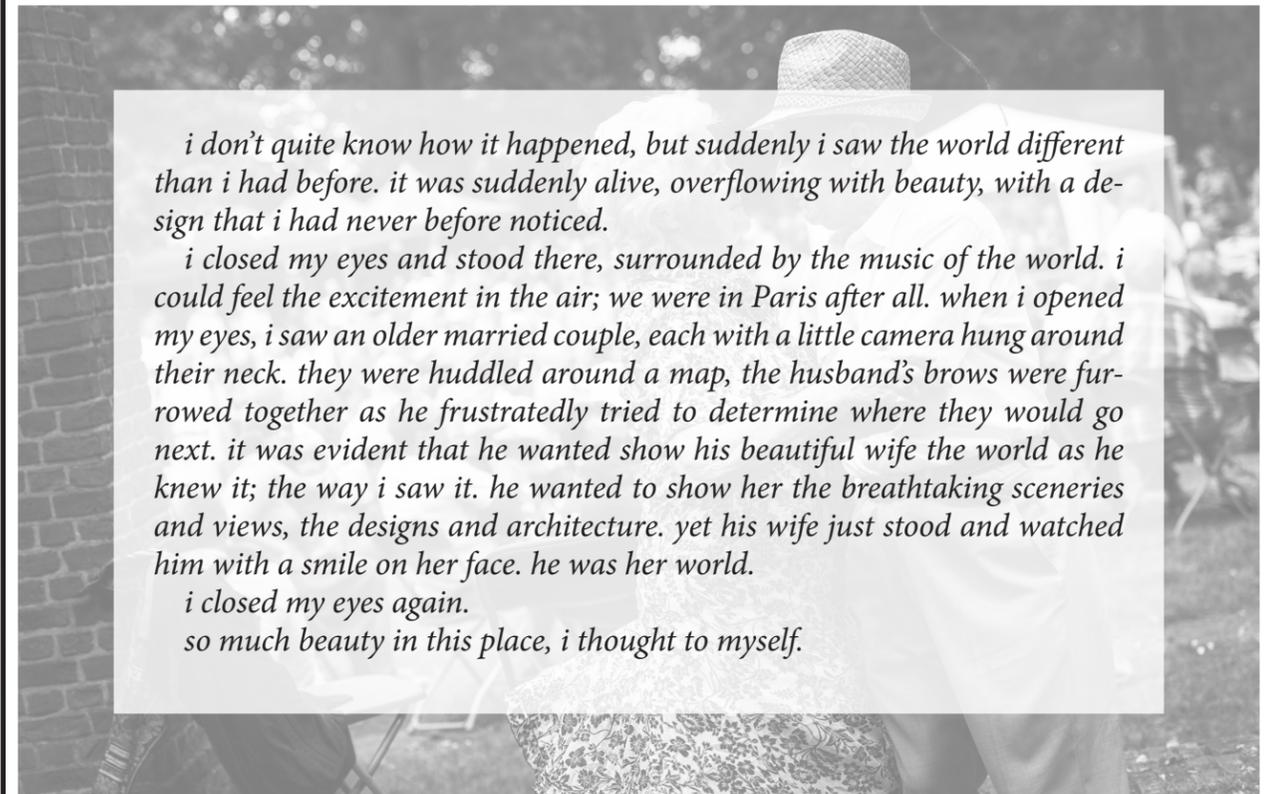


# PORTRAIT OF LIFE

*i don't quite know how it happened, but suddenly i saw the world different than i had before. it was suddenly alive, overflowing with beauty, with a design that i had never before noticed.*

*i closed my eyes and stood there, surrounded by the music of the world. i could feel the excitement in the air; we were in Paris after all. when i opened my eyes, i saw an older married couple, each with a little camera hung around their neck. they were huddled around a map, the husband's brows were furrowed together as he frustratedly tried to determine where they would go next. it was evident that he wanted show his beautiful wife the world as he knew it; the way i saw it. he wanted to show her the breathtaking sceneries and views, the designs and architecture. yet his wife just stood and watched him with a smile on her face. he was her world.*

*i closed my eyes again.  
so much beauty in this place, i thought to myself.*



# NEVER SHALL I FORGET

*Never shall I forget the nervousness and excitement*

*Never shall I forget the airport when I was leaving*

*Never shall I forget my dad's tears*

*Never shall I forget the voice which said "goodbye"*

*Never shall I forget the pounding sound in my mind*

*Never shall I forget the hug with my parents*

*Never shall I forget the gate where I said "goodbye"*

*Never shall I forget the moment when I left without my parents.*

*Never shall I forget the walk to an airplane.*

*Never shall I forget the warmth of a mother's love.*

*Never shall I forget the nervousness and excitement.*

NYAROCK  
GATLUAK



# HOW TO BE SUCCESS FUL

It isn't a surprise that the school year is more than halfway done; and still, we keep trying to act as if we'll get our act together. My motto for this year has basically become "I'll try harder next time," but we all know it isn't true for the most part. So, I have compiled a list of eleven habits that you probably need to put into play if you haven't already.

*Habit 1 is to get organized.*

I know it's not just me who doesn't keep track of their upcoming assignments and ends up drowning in schoolwork. To avoid this completely, look for what your teacher has coming up on their calendar, and even make your own calendar. Once you've mastered the art of being organized, all the other habits will start to fall into place.

*Habit 2 is NOT to multitask.*

Although sometimes we think we are Hannah Montanas and can have the "best of both worlds," that doesn't hold true in everything we do -- especially school. Although you want to believe that you're retaining all that information for biology or math studying while you're watching that episode of *Grey's Anatomy*, you're probably not. It's better to sit in a room with a little Mozart playing faintly in the background. Also, choose one assignment and work on it until it's done; don't overwhelm yourself with 3 assignments at once.

*Habit 3 is to divide the work.*

I think we can all come to the general consensus that studying isn't really entertaining in the slightest. It doesn't make it any better that we have to sit for *hours* at a time just to complete one assignment. Divide your school work into pieces that you can work with, and after completing each chunk, treat yourself: watch a three-minute video, have a dance party, go to pop shop, etc.

Habit 4 is to go to sleep.

Often times, we underestimate the power of sleep and try to pull all-nighters, or only sleep for a couple hours at a time. I believe God created sleep so we may wake up to be more focused and ready for what the world may throw at us the next day. Your assignment probably won't be as good as you want it to be if you stay up until 4 am to finish it. Just go to bed. I can't promise your work will still be there when you wake up, but at least you can say you slept like a baby.

Habit 5 is to set a schedule.

This one goes with the first habit. Find a time of the day when you do your best work. It may be during the extra help period with your teacher around, after dinner when you're not "hangry" anymore, or during study hall. Whenever it is for you, set a time for yourself to do work on your pressing assignments.

Habit number 6 is obvious — take notes.

This can be in-class or outside-class, but note-taking is key to keeping engaged in your school work. This also helps with figuring out what's actually important to study for tests and exams. It's easier to go over the notes that you made rather than trying to re-read your

textbook (unless your writing is illegible -- then just read your textbook.)

Habit 7 is to manage your study space.

Find an area where you do your best work. For example, I can't work on my bed with low lighting because I'll definitely fall asleep. Find an area where you are away from distractions, whether it is the TV, an unblocked computer, your phone, or even your friends.

Habit 8 goes hand in hand with everything we're discussing: study. How can you expect to do good in school if you put in absolutely no work? Take the initiative and work towards the goals that you have. "Just passing" should not always be the goal.

Habit 9 is to make a study group.

For huge tests, it can be a good idea to get together a group of two or three people. Sometimes it's good to bounce ideas off of each other. Sometimes what you don't know is what someone else knows and vice versa.

Habit 10 is to ask questions.

Sometimes we feel embarrassed to ask "stupid" questions in class, but the reality is this: if you never ask, you'll never know. Teachers are paid to answer all the questions you have, so just ask.

Habit 11 is to pray.

This is a habit that we often overlook. Prayer is the one outlet where we are able to ask whatever questions we want, to a Being that has all the answers, and then some. Sometimes we just need to vent to God with the doors closed in complete seclusion -- or we could even walk from class to class and whisper "God, help me." Remember that Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of God is the beginning of understanding." All knowledge comes from God, so if you're still not understanding the question even after Mrs. Russell taught it to you twice, pray real quick to the Giver of all Real Knowledge.

Now that you've read all of this, you have most of the tools needed to be successful for the next months. Remember to take your days one step at a time, as well as one prayer at a time, for "This too shall pass." ■

SAVION CALDERON



# DUMB GUYS

# FINISH

# LAST

Growing up in Toronto, I use to hear the elderly saying "Nice guys finish last." I had no clue as to what that meant growing up in church, where I was taught that you needed to treat people with respect and love, and you needed to be extremely "nice" just like Christ. I used to strongly believe that manners and behavior are universally desirable traits, and that people are attracted to other people who have/show said traits; these people choose to put others first. I was a passionate believer in the proverb *Do to others as you would have them do unto you*. I believed in that verse and I even patterned my life after it.

My earliest memories of me being a "nice guy" happened in Scarborough, where I interacted with people who did not share the same values. I quickly learned that being nice doesn't always work

— I remember trying to be nice to this kid on the playground and it always ended up with my face in the sand. My mother just instructed me to forgive him; she would even quote the Christian sayings, "Love your enemies" and "What would Jesus do?" The bullying happened every day, and I ended up with cuts and bruises every time. One day, I got pushed by my bully -- and this time I had had enough. I clenched my fist and attacked my opponent, striking him in the nose. From that time I was never bullied again. At home, I was just told that violence wasn't the answer and I should not have fought back. I was told I was not "nice," and Jesus didn't approve of my actions. From that time, I pondered on the idea of being nice and I came to the conclusion that the prehistoric saying "Nice guys finish last" was kind of correct — here is

why. People view "being nice" as being a pushover, but being nice doesn't mean you should be treated subpar or less than what you're worth. Being "nice" doesn't mean you should be bullied or treated like crap. Yet somehow, many people don't get the message. It still bothers me when I observe and hear people who still follow the "nice guy" rule when they are obviously being used.

I personally know this guy who spent every single penny he had on a girl he had a crush on; he would buy her flowers and he would take her on expensive dates, but all along she was attracted to somebody else. She was in love with a man who treated her like an accessory, not a future wife. But still, the virtuous guy spent every penny trying to impress his crush; he took her places and bought her things while she didn't even feel the



need to say thank you. I finally told my friend to confront her — and when he did, she got so upset like a wet scared chicken, that he took her back. *How ridiculous and how completely naïve can a person be?* I wondered (and still do wonder to this day.)

Jordan Peterson, a distinguished professor at the University of Toronto, once said, “It is more admirable to be cruel and choose not to be cruel than to not be capable of cruelty at all.” I interpret it to mean that it is better to come to a point where you can say “no” and refuse to be trampled under-foot by the will of others, than not being able to say no. If you can’t stand up for yourself, you will be subservient to the will of everyone; you will lack the strength to say “no,” or anything else. You won’t be in control of your actions, you will be a slave to the willpower of others, and you will

find no peace or happiness. You will find yourself depressed, watching others celebrate your own achievements. Am I saying to be a heartless monster or a self-centered prick? Of course not — I am just begging you to take responsibility for your actions and quit being placed repeatedly in the will of others (or in the friend zone.) Take your life back; if you want something, don’t sit and wait for it to be given to you — grab it, take it. I have learned that the harsh way. I thought that being nice would keep the person I cared about around, I thought that being there for them when they texted or called was the way to their heart. I thought being the first one to text them and the last one to leave would somehow make them have room in their hearts for me. You could walk in the rain for someone, and they would still leave you when something better comes

— they will see you upset and still willfully choose to ignore it. They will choose not to even make time for you, while they get all close and personal with everyone else. You might be reading this and thinking to yourself that no one goes through this, or you might be the “nice guy” or “nice girl” who is sacrificing your life for someone else. And my advice to you is this: don’t put others so far above yourself that you aren’t yourself anymore. Yes, God wants you to be respectful and kind, but he also said to be wise as a serpent and as gentle as a dove. You might think you are being “charming,” but you’re actually just being stupid. I believe the saying “nice guys finish last” should be changed because a nice guy would respect himself (or herself, for nice girls) enough to say “no.” I believe we should change it to: “A dumb guy finishes last.” ■

SELENA  
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# THE MINIMALIST LIFESTYLE

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*“Simplicity, clarity, singleness: These are the attributes that give our lives power and vividness and joy as they are also the marks of great art.”*  
- Richard Holloway -

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The word “minimal” (adj.) is simply “of a minimum amount, quantity, or degree.” The smallest piece of what is needed.

All around us, there is constant pressure to acquire more in life, to “live life to the fullest,” to have what can be acquired. Constantly we are told to live our lives to get more, to achieve more. We are taught to conform to society and work to buy things, to gather more, because that determines your place in society. The more you have, the more you are worth. That “more” is always better. We have come to a time where we

don’t define ourselves through our thoughts and actions but rather through the things we own and possess. We see happiness as those who have the bigger house, the better car, or the newer phone.

As a high school student, my life is pretty busy -- or at least it seems hectic in my mind. I have to balance school work, extra-curricular activities, church life, and my at-home life. Being the person I am, I like to keep things separated when I can and preferably not have anything colliding. If you were to look at my plate during a potluck, you’d see me separating the different foods because I don’t

like them touching -- kind of how I like my life separated. With all the things I have to do, would minimalism help me live, anyway?

When I first heard of minimalism, I thought of those aesthetic looking white-walled pictures with like a desk and a colourful flower in it. And as I read into it, I learned minimalism involves getting rid of clutter and organizing your life in a way that puts the value into you. It suggested donating clothes you don’t wear, donating books, useless souvenirs -- and it kept listing things that I realized I put a lot of value into. Whenever my family

would go on a trip, I would try to get some kind of souvenir. Usually a \$0.50 postcard or something tacky -- y'know, just to remember things. And as a 16-year old living in 2018, I look around my room and see a lot of junk. I spent my trips looking for something cute to add to the mess in my room, wasting hours of an experience I could've taken in but didn't. I probably won't revisit the places I've been to, and all I have to remember them are some blurry memories and a cheap key-chain. So I began to throw out some of the cheap things I've bought and started sorting through my clothes that I wore in like fifth grade but are somehow still sitting in my drawer. I donated a lot of the books I was obsessed with in fourth grade, and that was probably the cleanest my room had ever been. And it has been clean before, just saying -- but it really felt clean. I didn't have drawers filled with old clothes and I had space on my bookshelf that was

slowly bending from the weight of forgotten stories. I felt organized and clean, and I sat on my bed and felt more connected to the things I had kept.

Do you sometimes feel that, or at least suspect that your happiness doesn't lie in the things you possess? If you take a look at your life, you'd see a pile of earthly objects that mean nothing to you. When you first saw some of these things, did you ever think of how they would add value to your life? So if adding more to your life doesn't make you happier, what if less is more?

Minimalism is a path that can

lead you to freedom from materialistic worries and from the trap of the consumer culture. It doesn't mean that you have to throw all your things away, but rather you assign less value to your things. As human beings, it's in our nature to give meaning to things, to place value on objects that don't deserve our time or effort.

Logistically, adopting the minimalist lifestyle is more practical, especially for our generation, as the

real estate market is quite expensive nowadays and it's more practical for those to find a roommate (or multiple roommates.) And with multiple roommates comes less storage space. With less space and the very thought of more flexibility when it comes to having less stuff, more of us are adopting the minimalist lifestyle for different reasons. Other than being convenient to our busy and ever-changing lifestyles, buying fewer clothes means less exploitative sweatshops, consuming fewer products reduces the growth of landfills or plastic islands in the ocean; this leaves more space and natural resources for others. And past the social injustice and the environmental friendliness, having to work less in order to buy a bunch of things means that you have more time to spend with the people you want to see.

I probably won't be able to keep up with the minimalist lifestyle, but that one effort made a difference. Minimalism clears the mind, the stress, and the busy schedules we seem to be making every day. ■

*“One of the advantages of being born in an affluent society is that if one has any intelligence at all, one will realize that having more and more won't solve the problem, and happiness does not lie in possessions or even relationships: The answer lies within ourselves. If we can't find peace and happiness there, it's not going to come from the outside.”*

- Tenzin Palmo -

