Obscure song titles intrigue me. Rather than skip to the next track, I listen for clues about how artists decide what name to give their collection of lyrics, how their words, images, feelings and experiences suggest one theme. I hit replay—careful not to critique too swiftly. Music is my longstanding passion, and I find purpose and satisfaction in the art of listening. I enjoy the full experience as a song comes to a close, and I am in awe of how music transcends so many false boundaries of culture, class, and age. With logic, listening, and creative imagination, it becomes clear how a well-composed song converges in one, overarching title, which gives me all the more reason to listen very closely, to the very last second.

Several weeks ago, I found myself sitting in pew in Salina, Kansas. Myself traveling South and a dear friend venturing North, our journeys converged at this close-knit city in the middle of America, as my friend’s mother had recently relocated there. I was slightly apprehensive about attending this service; anxiety stemming from the probability of being immersed in a demographic of individuals I was not so accustomed to interacting with on a daily basis while in school. However, members of the congregation were perceptive to our newness. When asked with eager and attentive eyes where our party of three was from, the explanation of our hometowns, current geographic whereabouts, and relationships to each other was so layered and complex it may have easily seemed fabricated. Nonetheless, there we all were in one place. Familiar, radiant beams of sunlight poked through the magnificent stain glass windows as hymns from my childhood reverberated through the hall. Following the closing, a man behind us asked if I was a student there. Sheepishly, I unveiled the truth of my studies. He grinned and went next, revealing himself as a retired family practice physician. A flow of knowledge seeped through a previously impenetrable barrier, and the conversation between us only extrapolated our commonalities. As I gathered my things, he took my hand, shook it, and wished me the best of luck with an unmatched sincerity.

On a colder, more cloudy and recent Sunday in Omaha, a similar scene unfolded. I carefully took off my coat and nestled into the old wooden bench. My lips folded into a smile at the familiar inability of the pew to accommodate the small of my back due to my tall stature. A bit of a discomfort, but oddly, a comfort that reminded me of pews from home that prompted me to adopt a more erect posture. A potent elixir of old lady’s perfume, worn hymnals, the traveling scent of strong black coffee, and the dry sanctuary air was an emotive force upon my senses. I rode a nostalgic wave throughout the meditation of music and silence.

Continued next page
Perhaps I was still precipitating out of the last moments of the service, but it took a moment to grasp that someone behind me was trying to get my attention. I turned around to greet this person and was struck by the name above her title as Parish Nurse: my grandmother’s name. We quickly found common ground.

Intrigued by the bolded BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS printed in the bulletin, I probed with questions regarding community access to preventative healthcare, and she graciously and excitedly explained her initiatives. From blood pressure and glucose checks offered in between services, to basic CPR education and caregiver support classes, this retired nurse of over 40 years was doing something that astounded and inspired me. What was this convergence of faith and medicine, and why had I not encountered it before? She continued to baffle me by explaining that a visiting Jewish choir contributed to the service that day, and there was a traditional African service in Swahili about to begin downstairs should I want to take a gander. And so we did. The two of us stood in one place, listening to music sung in a not-so-foreign tongue.

Occasionally, on my way to classes in the morning, I ride the elevator in my apartment building with a little boy and his father. The first several times occurred without much notice on my part; I flashed a smile but was generally more concerned with emerging from the cloak of sleepiness that still clung to me. Our first dialogue exchange startled me, as I embarrassingly glanced up from my phone to respond.

But the next encounter, I rode the elevator with an intensified purpose void of technological distractions. The boy must not be older than five or so, as the tallest wisps of his dark brown hair surely did not clear my waist. I met the pair with a friendly greeting, and the father asked if I had any big plans for the day. “Not particularly,” I responded. I could sense the boy’s disinterest in our adult conversation, so I divulged. “I have a big test in school today.” That seemed to capture his attention, and the little boy slowly stretched his neck back to meet my downward gaze. I paused- he sported an adorably disproportion-ate whimsical backpack, and his mittens clutched a matching lunchbox. We were mirror images of each other, albeit the wondrous patterning on my correlating school gear. Seeing the sleep of my eyes reflected in his, I spoke enthusiastically, yet sincerely. “I’m on my way to school, too.” After a moment more of silence, a ding signaled we had reached our destination. The elevator doors opened, and the boy scurried out ahead of me to keep pace with his father. His little light-up shoes flashed fiercely: a green light as if to say go, race on to greet the day.

In these collective encounters, it is evident what makes us intrinsically human: the dance of interactions we do with others. We are not so unlike each other. Whether it is with a friend, stranger, or future patient, it only takes a willingness, a curiosity, and an open ear to explore our commonalities. I’m listening.
Dan, the artist, died on a Thursday.

I recently dug up a yellowed photo of five awkward, pimply, intra-pubescent sixth graders, gathered around a box of the cardboard-iest pizza in the San Francisco Bay Area. In the background was a poorly-maintained animatronic mouse by the name of Chuck. This photo stands out to me because the five of us were in the midst of debating what his middle initial, E, stood for. Mikey, Jackson, and Andrew contended that it must stand for “Eats” - Chuck Eats Cheese, duh.

Being the snot I was, I quipped back to my uncultured friends whatever the 1999 equivalent of “OMG #Basic” was. Convinced that such an awesome creature surely must have a more dignified name, I launched into a history lecture about how Charles Edmonton Czesari IV, crown prince of Mousavia, escaped his home country when a coup d’état forced him into exile. With all his worldly treasures burned to the ground in his former 82-room palace, he arrived on Ellis Island with nothing but forty dollars and half a block of cheese - Muenster, natch. To avoid recognition by any possible spies, he decided to take on a more relatable, American name. Thus, the once-proud crown prince of the formerly fourth-largest exporter of fermented dairy products in Eastern Europe became Chuck E. Cheese. He worked from the bottom up, scrubbing dishes and mopping vomit off bar bathroom floors, eventually making Manager of the local college late night grease slop. With his overtime and penny-pinching, he achieved his dream of opening his own chain of strip mall children’s entertainment centers, featuring his family’s subpar pizza recipe and germ-covered ball pits. So, no, his middle name isn’t Eats.

Mikey, Jackson, and Andrew asked me, in so many words, to please shut the hell up. I felt like a boob.

And then there was Dan. To quote the late Stuart Scott, this kid was cooler than the other side of the pillow. Rather than shoot me down like my other jerk friends, he was intrigued by this creative outlet. Over the next couple months, we wrote out an unnecessarily deep story behind the adventures of Charles Edmonton Czesari IV: Dan, the comic artist, and I, the crappy writer, managed to spit out a short graphic novel. We proudly presented it to our English teacher, dreams of New York Times Bestseller dancing around our naive heads. The old curmudgeon, two years away from retirement, gruffly shot our dreams down with a review of “Worthless. One star.”

Dan, the future psychiatrist, died on a Thursday.

As a kid, I didn’t take setbacks too well. I punched, I threw, I screamed, I moped. My mother, bless her heart, did her best to keep me under control, but single parenthood never makes anything easier. I’m pretty sure I broke her. Sorry, mom.

“How dare that jerk talk about our hard work like that!” I snarled. “He doesn’t deserve to be a teacher!” My fellow sixth-graders, those animals, either gave me half-hearted pats on the back or told me to quit my belly-achin’. I’m pretty sure they gave me Peptic Ulcer Disease. But Dan could always calm me down.

“It’s okay, man. He just doesn’t know genius when he sees it. He can’t even see his toes over that gut of his!” Laughter ensued, shortly followed by a quick battle of the Pokémon card game. He destroyed me without a sweat. I laughed anyway. Dan had a way of doing that to people. Typical son of a psychiatrist.

Dan, the Stanford superfan, died on a Thursday.

That Sunday, those of us who loved him stood around a mahogany cradle on a Cardinal campus that never admitted him into their hallowed gates, but received his undying loyalty regardless. Underneath the azure California sky, the sun outside Memorial Church bounced off the brass handles into streams of our gentle tears. Seventy-eight degrees, a slight breeze keeping us cool, hung over undergrads relaxing with volleyball on The Oval just around the corner. He would’ve loved to be there. He belonged there.

It’s been two weeks, and I’m still getting photos of wilted flower petals and makeshift signs plastered all over the chain link fence where the train crosses Churchill Avenue, the south border of our old high school.

Dan, the third-year medical student, died on a Thursday.

Life throws us curveballs. They’re hard enough to deal with, even if we have all the love and support at our fingertips; many have to fight those battles not fully equipped with the stability or capacity to win. Asking for help doesn’t make you weak, it makes you human. Remember: you’ll never walk alone.

Love one another.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
Although it may not seem so now, but as we move into spring not only will the weather, but the pace of studying will likely heat up for many of our students. A hectic spring semester of courses for M1s, the wind up toward Step 1 for M2s, the decision-making involved in setting up an M3 schedule and a specialty choice for M3s, and the anticipated transition to the “real world” for M4s. Seems like a lot to think about and, for some, understandably, to stress over.

As you know, there are a lot of things you can do to cope more effectively with stress. Stress buffers such as getting adequate sleep, eating right, exercising, and staying active socially and recreationally are a few ways to moderate the effects of stress on your mind and body. And there are a host of stress management strategies that are useful as well including exercise (again), time management, and watching your self-talk. I wanted to focus on another strategy that, despite being simple, is often taken for granted – relaxation.

The relaxation response is a powerful and built in mechanism to help us rest and recover from life’s stressors. It allows us to decrease our breathing, heart rate, blood pressure, and metabolism, and reduces anxiety, fear, stress, and tension. Relaxation also helps us to cope better with pain, enhance immune system functioning, speed recovery from illness and surgery, assist with sleep, and manage chronic health problems.

So, what in the heck does the relaxation response entail? At its most basic level, relaxation can occur through the pursuit of attainable pleasures such as watching a movie, listening to music, and taking a long shower or bath. Taking it to the next level, relaxation involves taking slow deep breaths – typically belly breaths that include breathing in slowly for three seconds, holding that breath for a second, and then slowly exhaling for three seconds. As you breath in you should feel your belly go out and as you exhale your belly should go back in. A key to this is making sure to pair a word or two such as “relax” or “let go” with each exhalation. Try it and practice it and you will see that it truly makes a difference. And, you can do it anywhere!

Once you master deep breathing you can add muscle relaxation. You can either start at the top of your head and scalp region and gently tighten up and then loosen muscle groups as you slowly progress downward to your feet and toes or you can passively allow these muscle groups to relax in the same order. Take your time and just allow your muscles to relax passively. Again, each time you breathe out you should tell yourself to “relax” or “let go.” I also like to remind myself to sense the warmth and heaviness in my muscles, and specifically my hands and my feet. Just allow your hands and feet to feel heavy and warm.

Finally, I recommend using some peaceful imagery as you get more relaxed. Imagine yourself at a secluded tropical beach or up in the mountains – whatever works for you. Then visualize all the sights, colors, sounds, sensations, and so forth so that you truly feel like you are there. As you are doing this, it also helps to inject some positive self-talk about your ability to do well and to persevere. After 15-20 minutes (or as long as you see fit), slowly re-orient yourself to the here and now and go forward confidently with your day as you maintain a relaxed mind and body.

All the best!

Shrink Rap: Relaxation

Michael G. Kavan, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Student Affairs

"let go" with each exhalation. Try it and practice it and you will see that it truly makes a difference. And, you can do it anywhere!
“Joy comes at the peak of an experience, and then always as a surprise. I cannot have joy on demand. At best, I go where I have felt it before.” – Dr. George Sheehan, Running and Being

One thing I’ve learned in the last four years is that I am happiest when I’m doing my very best. This sounds simple and obvious, but only if you’ve experienced it – I mean really experienced it - do you know what I mean. It’s that euphoria when you’re breathing hard but steady in the middle of a tempo run, or the joy when you’re mentally multitasking and in a flow. In two areas of my life, I feel lucky to have the opportunity to challenge myself and work at the edge of my potential. Those two areas are medicine and running.

The most fulfilling rotation of my M4 year was an externship I did in internal medicine. Finally I was doing a rotation I loved and that I chose over all others. I was given full intern level responsibility at a busy inner-city hospital with a large patient load. Every day I was mentally challenged by my patients, my attendings, my residents, and myself. Having physician mentors who challenge you is invaluable. Don’t ever take that for granted or think of it in a negative way. On a daily basis, it was all I could do to get my work done, complete my run, and get to bed at a reasonable time. It wasn’t until the end of the month that I took a deep breath and thought to myself, “Wow, that was crazy but so exhilarating!” I probably learned things as fast as my brain would allow, and worked mentally juggling tasks and ideas constantly. I genuinely felt the happiest and most fulfilled I have in my entire medical school career, and I think the reason for this is because I wasn’t afraid to stretch and challenge myself.

“Live your own life. Success is not something that can be measured or worn on a watch or hung on a wall. Success is not the esteem of your colleagues, or the admiration of the community, or the appreciation of your patients. Success is the certain knowledge that you have become yourself, the person you were meant to be from all time.”

For me, running and learning to be a doctor have challenged me and helped me to become the best version of myself. Only through challenges will you learn who you really are, accept yourself, and live your most fulfilling life.
Buzzfeed is slowly, actually, quite rapidly taking over my Facebook newsfeed. Every time I open my profile page and read an article named something like: “16 reasons why baby aardvarks are the most conflicting animals ever”, I have a fleeting moment of embarrassment, because I know that there is nothing I can do to stop myself from clicking on the story. The wrinkly but adorable baby aardvark keeps staring at me, and I open the list to find exactly what I expect: it’s mildly amusing, but never as good as the title and concludes with a less than hilarious, cute quip. After I’m disappointed for the 100th time, I erase the story from my history. This is because, as an over thinker, I start to imagine a hypothetical scenario in which my computer fails, and the super smart technician guy opens my laptop, only to find a Buzzfeed article pop up of various cats dressed up as sushi. Hence, I am completely aware of the addictive nature of the listicle culture. But I also know that I am not alone in succumbing to its flirtation. It’s ubiquitous. So, I did a little research on why millennials are so drawn to lists, and what I found whispered themes of BEMED and Neuro. Plus, it was pretty interesting, so I organized it in list form. I mean, why reinvent the wheel, right?

1. **Love at first click:** Your typical listicle has a Super Amazing Capitalized Headline That Grabs Our Attention, tells us how long it’ll be, and intrigues us. Our brains are drawn to numbers in headlines, Maria Konnikova tells us, because they ‘pop’. People know most listicles won’t require a big time commitment. And people share them.

2. **Hey good lookin’:** The listicle itself is another example of text drawing more and more heavily on graphic principles. They give you plenty of white space and separate sections, which is helpful because our brains like to locate and memorize information spatially. Each particle is its own argument, so it’s perfect for skimming while waiting for the bus.

3. **Just between you and me:** There’s an implicit pact between writer and reader in a listicle. I promise to be engaging, says the writer. I’ll give you little chunks of mini-argument that you can digest easily, quickly and separately. I won’t give you a structure – A, so B, but C, conclusion D – rather; my numbers will aid you “in organizing what is otherwise overwhelming” (David Wallechinsky, author of The Book of Lists).

4. **Telling Time:** Humans have always been drawn to lists. Reducing the world to a grocery list makes it easily digestible, tells you when it’s going to end, and lets you know if you’ve got time to go to the bathroom.

5. **Reading patterns are changing – wow, what a cute cat!** Listicles are tailor-made for this world of interruptions, because interruption is part of the structure. Lose your place? Start wherever you like. Skip a number? Doesn’t matter. And when you finish the article you’ll get a tiny shot of pleasure for completing the task, which is in itself enough, argues social psychologist Robert Zajonc, to inform future decisions. Like reading more lists.

6. **Goldfish-1, Humans-0:** The average human attention span decreased from 12 seconds in the year 2000 to 8 seconds in 2013, according to a recent US study. Your average goldfish comes in at 9 seconds. The good news is that human brains are characterized by neuroplasticity: we can change our brain structure by changing our behavior, and vice versa. There is substantial evidence that cognitive activities like meditation, language learning and brain training have major beneficial effects on our neural structures. Old habits die hard; the challenge is to turn them into new habits.

7. **Are the listicle’s days numbered?** All things are cyclical and a simple search reveals plenty of news stories attacking the listicle, but there’s no evidence of it slowing yet. In the meantime, you have a choice. Next time your mouse hovers over a headline, consider for a moment whether it’s what you really want – and let’s face it, we all like fast food once in a while – or whether you’d prefer something slower, more substantial, and satisfying.

Basically, lists make infinity comprehensible.

Be careful not to catch it: stress can be contagious! I recently came upon a study, conducted by German psychologists, which showed seeing another person under stress can then cause a high empathic stress response in the observer. (Engert et al., 2014). The responses were measured by the activation of the stress hormone cortisol. So is stress catching? Does it seem like you might even know a few “carriers”?

There are certainly academic situations that stress medical students. A few coming up might be Neuroscience, Step 1, Step 2, and the Match. One of the ways I look at students’ stress reactions is through the lens of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. All of us need to be able to recognize stress within ourselves in order to deal with the stress of our classmates and significant others.

Here is a brief description of what types of situations that could be particularly stressful to your MBTI preferences:

**ISTJ** – disorganized, irrational, emotional situations. Situations that don’t allow closure. Having to wait for anything.

**ISFJ** – suspected or actual tension with those cared about. No thought behind a plan. Constant people interruptions. Situations that are continuously changing and requiring adapting.

**ISTP** – Rigid routine. Open sharing of emotions being required.

**ISFP** – Self promotion. Required to critique others. Commitment to a rigid plan.

**INFJ** – Hostile, critical atmosphere, confrontation, working where innovation is not possible, not knowing what is expected. Constant supervision, insignificant interruptions.

**INTJ** – Dependent people, indecisiveness, repetitive work. Details, large groups for too long a time, dealing with incompetence.

**INFP** – frequent interruptions, conflict of value in work, having to supervise others, closing off possibilities and committing self. Highly competitive situations.

**INTP** – public presentations, having to respond to someone else’s agenda, righteousness, absence of new situations.

**ESTP** – lengthy explanations, discussions of irrelevant abstractions and theories.

**ESFP** – Conflict, rigid schedule, no opportunity for socialization, disappointing friends or significant others.

**ENFP** – Confrontation, conflict, highly routine, repetitive, undemanding situations, working virtually alone, deadlines that are not their choice.

**ENTP** – too much alone time, routine, repetitive details, deadlines, close supervision, spewing of emotions by others.

**ESTJ** – last minute deadlines, when others don’t follow through, unclear communication, inefficiency, coping with illogical situations.

**ESFJ** – lack of knowledgeable leadership, slow decision making, confrontations, and breaking rules.

**ENFJ** – conflict/confrontation, competitive situations, people not open to change, routine, disharmony, criticism, sudden change in plans.

**ENTJ** – routine, incompetence, indecision, ambiguous situations, rigid, detail oriented inflexible situations.

In the study both men and women showed equivalent empathy despite the stereotype. Being aware of what your stressors are is the first step. Then determining who or what brings these stressors into your academic life may assist you in decisions about where, when, with whom and how you spend your time in this Spring Semester.

Your Biggest Stressors
When feedback is positive—it’s the ecstasy. However, sometimes, it’s just more information than you care to hear if it’s negative—and can be agony! Medical school is full of opportunities to receive feedback—scores on quizzes, comments from peers about interviewing skills, evaluations on patient interactions and H & P skills. . . . the list goes on and on and will only continue throughout residencies. Feedback is incorporated at every step of the medical education process in order to become a physician that is both skilled and professional.

We love positive feedback—nothing feels better than to receive comments on what a good job I did. Constructive (not negative) feedback, however, is another story. Hearing that the interview was awkward or incomplete doesn’t feel good. Getting a poor evaluation from a preceptor is discouraging. Just barely passing the exam shakes self-confidence. While negative feedback sometimes is provided to punish or diminish, constructive feedback is provided with the goal of helping us learn and grow.

Even so, it still may be hard to hear and reactions may occur in several ways; 1) become defensive and try to justify or explain actions; 2) dismiss the feedback is incorrect or irrelevant; or finally 3) step back to hear what the other person has to say and determine how you can learn and grow from their input.

Think of feedback with the following matrix:

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<tr>
<td>Expected</td>
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<td>Unexpected</td>
<td>C</td>
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- **Positive/Expected**: We typically have an idea of what we do well and how we excel because more than likely, you receive consistent positive feedback about those things. Ask yourself—How can I continue to use these skills or attributes? How can I still continue to develop in these areas? How can use these strengths to help others who are not as strong in these areas?

- **Negative/Expected**: Honestly, we probably know areas in which we are weak and in which we could use a little extra work. Sometimes we may know what we’re weak in, but don’t know how to change. Ask yourself—How can I work on changing these areas of weaknesses? If I don’t make these changes, how will it impact my life or my career?

- **Positive/Unexpected**: This is like a nice present that comes out of the blue. It’s a great feeling to get positive feedback from someone—maybe about something you didn’t know about yourself. Ask yourself—Why was I surprised to hear this? How can I use this feedback to build on this unexpected skill/characteristic? How can I use this to improve my life or career?

- **Negative/Unexpected**: This is the most difficult to hear—because sometimes it flies in the face of what you believe about yourself. Maybe this comes in areas you may be reluctant to face or acknowledge, but if faced, can lead to self-discovery and improvement. Ask yourself—Do I need other input in this area? What support can I use to deal with the implications? How can I make changes in these areas? How will improving this area help develop my life and career?

Use the SKS approach upon receiving feedback, according to Phil Daniels, a psychology professor at Brigham Young University. Ask:

What should I **Stop** doing?
What should I **Keep** doing?
What should I **Start** doing?

These three questions can help you use feedback constructively in your life. In situations where you are receiving feedback as well as those in which you are asked to provide feedback for others, these questions can provide a framework for focusing on specific things you do well and those you could improve upon. It is action-focused as it provides practical insight into yourself and others. Feedback is important—welcome it as it will make you a better physician.
Adulthood: It Isn’t All It’s Cracked Up To Be

Alyssa Hickert
M3

My grandfather was a hard worker and a soft man. He liked to say, “most people don’t recognize opportunity when it stands in front of them... Because it’s usually wearing overalls and looks a lot like hard work.” And my grandfather knew as much about overalls as he did about hard work—which is to say, he knew a lot. A farmer in Western Kansas for the entirety of his life, he was quick to pick up slack and slow to end a party. In fact, on more than one occasion he would leave raucous guests in his living room to turn in for the night, only asking that they “turn the lights out when you leave.” All in all, he was a man who couldn’t afford to try less than his best, and even though my memories of him are surely colored by both affection and the passage of time, I wish more individuals I encountered were like him today. Because, really, in a lot of ways adulthood is not all it’s cracked up to be.

The tricky thing about “adulthood” is it comes when you least expect it. You eagerly anticipate its arrival with the attainment of a driver’s license, or with your departure to college, and instead it hails you with a bad joint or a newly-discovered intolerance for all-nighters. Really, the cruel truth is adulthood strikes at a different time for everyone (and sometimes never at all). Personally, I think you can consider yourself an adult when the sad weight of responsibility outweighs the invigorating sense of freedom that comes along with it. Hopefully, for most of us, this heralds an accompanying sense of satisfaction—the kind that follows a job well done, or a decision well-made. However, if I have learned anything in my few years beyond adolescence, it is that entering adulthood does not always equate to acting like an adult. The same way that a medical degree doesn’t guarantee a moral compass, and applying to the Match doesn’t promise you a residency. It was a tough realization to face, encountering adults who continued to act like children. And, unfortunately, life is full of people with whom you will not get along, or who you will have difficulty understanding.

Yet, despite its many disheartening qualities, one of the redeeming features of adulthood is the opportunity it offers, to broaden your horizons. And I mean this in (forgive the redundancy) the broadest sense. We equate adulthood with settling down or settling in, and while this is all well and good, I think it is important to never reach a point of complacency. Becoming an adult does not mean you have to stop growing, and stability does not have to be the same as stasis. Much like future bills and waistslines, our experiences will continue to grow—we just need to choose to grow along with them.

But how are we to do this? How are we to wake at the sound of the alarm, hit snooze a half dozen times, pack our brains full of information for eight hours (or more), dedicate attention and affection to the people we value, feed ourselves (a whole three times?!), accomplish the mundane tasks of remaining a contributing member of society, AND grow as people? Ultimately, I think the best way to do this is to choose to grow along with them... Because it’s usually wearing overalls and looks a lot like hard work.” And my grandfather knew as much about overalls as he did about hard work—which is to say, he knew a lot. A farmer in Western Kansas for the entirety of his life, he was quick to pick up slack and slow to end a party. In fact, on more than one occasion he would leave raucous guests in his living room to turn in for the night, only asking that they “turn the lights out when you leave.” All in all, he was a man who couldn’t afford to try less than his best, and even though my memories of him are surely colored by both affection and the passage of time, I wish more individuals I encountered were like him today. Because, really, in a lot of ways adulthood is not all it’s cracked up to be.

A wise friend once told me, “Very few people in this world are truly unreasonable; everyone has a reason for behaving the way they do.” To me—and hopefully I am not out on a ledge, alone in this philosophy—this is the crux of the matter. Regardless of the complications or difficulties that arise in our everyday dealings with people, we can always ask ourselves, “what experiences influence this person? What reasons (however miscalculated or incorrect they may be) are motivating them?” Granted, this may still be a long way from reaching agreement, but it means that—ideally—you leave the interaction with a little more insight and a little more appreciation. And maybe, just maybe, if you’re lucky enough, that insight will help you grow into someone who leaves the world better than they found it.

Ultimately, I would like to be half the person my grandfather was: he worked during the Great Depression, put eleven children through college, ran a farm, and remained a person his neighbors could count on. Currently, it takes us weeks to rake our yard.
Continued from page 9

Still, you can't learn from other people if you don't know enough about yourself and where you come from. And that brings me to my second piece of advice, regarding adulthood: don't disregard the experiences that made you the person you have become. For better or for worse, Freud was not as incorrect as we would like to think. It may not be an Oedipus-sized issue, but everyone grows up with bias. We expect certain reactions, behaviors, experience—and our disappointment too often fuels a loss of perspective. I am proud to have known as good a man as my grandfather, and I would like to believe he is one of many loving people who help coax out the better aspects of myself.

So, take time to know where you come from. Whether you can trace your family tree back to Charlemagne, or the only thing you can remember from childhood is rescuing your brother when he fell through the ice, adulthood is nothing without childhood. Plus, it's important to remember that everyone's parents are weird—it's really not their fault.

In the end, adulthood comes at us whether we are ready or not—and let's be honest, no one is ever truly ready. You're not the only one who thinks fondly (and daily) of returning to college. Maybe, with some effort and perspective (and a few more games of flashlight tag) we can make adulthood as interesting and pleasant a ride as childhood was. At the very least, I'm willing to give it a shot if you are.

“I had a wonderful childhood, which is tough because it's hard to adjust to a miserable adulthood.”

– Larry David

Adulthood

It's March Madness!

2015 NCAA Bracket

All Times Eastern US

East

West

South

Midwest

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP
INDIANAPOLIS
APRIL 5
CBS

ROUND 1 - DAYTON

MW

S

W

E

11 Ole Miss

10 Robert Morris

16 Morgan State

8 Nebraska

5 Notre Dame

13 LSU

11 Illinois

16 Mississippi

8 Louisiana State

5 Alabama

13 Western Kentucky

11 Stanford

16 Virginia

8 LSU

5 Cincinnati

13 Harvard

11 Texas A&M

16 UAB

8 Davidson

5 St. John's

13 Cal State Northridge

11 Boise State

16 Robert Morris

8 Kentucky

5 Southern Mississippi

13 Harvard

11 Oklahoma State

16 Arizona State

8 Miami (Ohio)

5 Michigan State

13 Rhode Island

11 California

16 Bucknell

8 Stony Brook

5 Creighton

13 Montana State

11 Harvard

16 Florida Gulf Coast

8 North Carolina State

5 Gonzaga

13 East Tennessee State

11 Stanford

16 Colgate

8 Cal Poly

5 Virginia Commonwealth

13 South Dakota State

11 Notre Dame

16 Montana State

8 North Dakota State

5 North Carolina

13 Mississippi State

11 Oklahoma State

16 Loyola Chicago

8 Georgia State

5 Providence

13 Northwestern

11 Texas State

16 Appalachian State

8 Delaware

5 Oklahoma

13 Florida Gulf Coast

11 South Dakota State

16 Montana State

8 Colgate

5 Gonzaga

13 East Tennessee State
**Monster Cookies**

Makes 48+

- 2 sticks (1/2 pound) butter, softened
- 1 1/4 cups brown sugar, packed
- 1 tbsp. vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 cups oats (quick or regular)
- 1 1/2 cups m&m’s
- 2 large eggs
- 1 1/4 cups chocolate chips

**DIRECTIONS:**

1. Cream butter with sugars until fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add vanilla and beat.
2. Combine flour, baking soda, and salt. Add to mixing bowl and mix till combined. Add in the remaining ingredients, reserving the rice cereal to add last. Do not overmix.
3. Roll cookie dough into 1.5-2” balls or desired size.
4. Bake at 350 degrees until golden brown or approximately 12 minutes, then allow to cool on a rack.

**Notes:** If the dough seems sticky to roll the dough into balls with your hands, refrigerate it for a bit until it’s easier to handle.

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**Five Spice Chicken with Lemon Sauce**

- 2 chicken breasts cut into bite-sized pieces
- 4 T cornstarch
- 6 T flour
- 2 T five spice (see Note)

**Lemon Sauce:**

- 1/4 c. sugar
- 1/4 c. chicken broth
- 1/4 c. water
- 1/2 t salt
- 2 T cornstarch
- 1 t. sesame oil
- 1/4 c. lemon juice

**For the chicken:**

1. Combine the 4 T cornstarch, 6 T flour and 2 teaspoons of five spice in a bowl. Mix together.
2. Beat eggs in another bowl and dip the chicken into the egg.
3. Dunk the egg-coated chicken in the flour and five-scare mixture. Dredge well!
4. To Fry: heat canola or vegetable oil in a pan and with care, drop chicken in oil and cook until golden brown (6-7 minutes).
5. To Bake: Preheat oven to 350F. Place chicken on a heavily greased pan (ie layer of canola oil). Bake for 15-20 minutes for bite-sized chicken, longer for large pieces of chicken.

**For the lemon sauce:**

1. Heat chicken broth and mix in the sugar until the sugar melts.
2. Add sesame oil and lemon juice, stir.
3. Then add water and cornstarch to thicken.
4. Heat on high until the sauce thickens to desired consistency. Once sauce thickens, remove from heat immediately!

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**Five Spice Chicken**

Note: Five Spice is easily found at a local Asian store. Or you can make your own and store it in a plastic bag for future use: 1 t. ground cinnamon + 1/2 t. ground cloves + 1 t. fennel seed, toasted and ground + 1 t. ground star anise + 1 t. szechuan peppercorns, toasted and ground.

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**Cooking with Diana**
James McDonald (M1) and Kayla Ketcheson
Engaged: Dec. 20, 2014
Wedding: July 18, 2015 in Winnipeg, Canada

Alyssa Irlmeier (M3) and David Buckenheimer
Engaged: June 30, 2013
Married: Dec. 27, 2014 in St. Louis, Missouri