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Final thoughts: take 'em or leave 'em

Dear Readers: When I was hired as the Oregon Daily Emerald's advice columnist last May, my first thought was, "They want me to give other people advice? I can barely get my own life together!"



Natasha Chilingirian
Ask Nat

But after reviewing questions and pondering the dramas of strangers, I noticed that being an outsider helped me gain a logical perspective on situations and solve problems with ease. So conveniently, I have become wiser and gained enlightenment on some of my own dilemmas (what a nice perk)! Here are five lessons I learned this year, and with luck you can make use of them, too.

1. Don't live anywhere that makes you miserable. I regretfully admit I am a two-year veteran of the residence halls. In December, I couldn't take the claustrophobia anymore, so I scoured the classifieds for an apartment. Suddenly, I remembered I couldn't get out of my housing contract. I've been stuck avoiding my "home" and counting the days. So think hard about how happy you will be in a living situation of choice before signing a lease or contract.

2. Girls, ditch Bride's magazine. Sure, there are a few engaged couples on campus, which proves some men aren't terrified of commitment. And that's great! (And it's a freak of nature.) I have learned that nine out of 10 times, a college-age male will run for miles if his girlfriend is even thinking about the m-word. So ladies, if you're one of the many without an engagement ring, put off deciding the color of your bridesmaids' flowers and do some

career planning.

3. Choose midnight margaritas over zzz's once in a while. I used to be a sleep-craving early bird. In college, I've learned that my body can perform on little sleep, and it's really not so bad. And, unsurprisingly, some of my most treasured memories took place after the sun set. Unless you have a huge job interview or exam in the a.m., don't be shy about making the most of the after-hours.

4. Not president of (fill in the blank)? So what? When I went back to my old high school to see the spring musical, I thought, "Wow, I've never had the lead in a musical; I was just in the chorus. I wasn't the star of the dance team either, I was only a member. And now at college, what kind of star quality do I have here?" Well, I'm in school — doing well — and I write for the newspaper, both of which I am very proud. Instead of comparing your achievements with others, see how your

accomplishments rank in the scheme of your own life and pat yourself on the back.

5. If you're not a clone of your parents, you're normal. For a large chunk of time, I listened to everything my parents said as gospel. Then I realized maybe their lectures were only opinions. Your parents are just people with varying views on life, and disagreeing with them on politics, religion and/or morality is OK. You may feel a little guilty at first, but remember, going with your gut and leading a life of personal happiness is most important.

So there you have it — five final thoughts to finish out the year. I honestly feel my advice has evolved to be smarter and keener than ever before, but I'll let you be the judge. Take it or leave it — it's up to you.

Contact the columnist at natashachilingirian@dailyemerald.com. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

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Grad ceremonies should include hits like 'Life of Pain'

The graduation song is a fine tradition as old as our hallowed educational institutions. What graduation — what final step into the public world and the start of a new life for a generation of students — would be complete without Green Day's "Good Riddance (Time of Your Life)"? Nary a one, I would say.



Ryan Nyburg
Budget rack

But with recent budget cuts, it is possible this sacred musical farewell could be forgotten. So I have made it my task, nay my duty, to make sure the University does not forget the honor and necessity of this tradition.

To that end, I offer some fine musical fare that this University, as well as any other educational institution, can use for its graduation ceremonies. These songs, as well as others, are available at reasonable prices — plus shipping and handling. You might say this sounds like I am profiting from the recent budget cuts causing so many problems for the educational system. To this cynical and wrong-minded thinking, I say shame, and how dare you criticize such a fine American tradition, fully in line with the capitalist spirit? And now the songs.

The classics are always appropriate in these situations, so why not choose an old pop ballad for your graduation? One of my favorites is that old Burt Bacharach hit, "I Just Don't Know What to Do With Myself." Considering the difficulty graduates have finding em-

ployment these days, this song will speak to many.

And what better describes the emotions felt by former students about to enter the "real world" than that Mark Dinning-penned classic "Teen Angel," a song about a young woman who gets trapped in a stalled car on the railroad tracks and is killed by an oncoming freight train? It's a powerful metaphor. Also, how about the Bobby Bare country standard, "Drop Kick Me Jesus Through the Goal Post of Life"?

But often the classics just don't speak to today's youth, and more modern selections might be in order. For those about to enter the corporate world, I would suggest that great Tool song "Prison Sex." I think the title says it all.

Or how about some classic jazz for graduation, like Thelonious Monk's "Just a Gigolo"? And who wouldn't want that great Black Flag song "Life of Pain" playing as they walk up to the podium?

In order to increase the diversity of graduation song selections, I've even penned a few songs of my own for the occasion. I think my "Graduation Blues" ought to fit the bill for many colleges, with lines such as "I ain't got no job / My girlfriend left me too / The feds confiscated my bong / And my student loan payments are due." I've also penned a sure-fire country hit, "My Dog Ate My Thesis and was Hit by a Truck."

These and other fine songs are available for your graduation at competitive prices. Purchase one, and help keep this tradition alive.

Contact the Pulse Columnist at ryannyburg@dailyemerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

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