An open letter to experienced college students,

Hey guys, how’s it going?

This year is going to be my senior year in college. This has made me really desire reflection of my collegiate career while striving towards my future goals. Primarily, that being in college for such a long time is a pain in the butt.

Nah, I’m just being mean. But a lot of college students who have been going to school nearly constantly for years, decades even, suffer from legitimate fatigue. Obviously, nobody wants to feel wrung out. In the last two years leading up to graduation that is the last state of mind in which students want to be.

So, I just want to go over some tips and activities that have helped me get through the years of college, stress and (near) constant work. Take these as little bit of advice, or survival tips, in time for the beginning of the school year. Please don’t read this as a warning, but as encouragement to find your peace in the middle of calamity.

**If You Can Get Ahead, Stay Ahead.**

Look, balancing school with jobs, kids, clubs and a million other things can be taxing. Sometimes school work just can’t be the priority. But, in those precious times when you have an opportunity to get ahead, take it. It may be tempting to look past it and do the work later, but take the extra five minutes to get a head start; check those emails even when you don’t feel like it. The load you take on today will ease the pressure of tomorrow.

**...But, Nothing is Wrong with Rest.**

It may seem hypocritical, but, even considering what I just said, there is absolutely nothing wrong with taking some time for yourself. I don’t necessarily mean going to bed or passing out from working all day. I mean take a moment, find something you really enjoy doing, and do it. Watch a movie. Spend time with loved ones. It doesn’t matter what. The point is to make a conscious effort to spend time on yourself.

**It may seem difficult, but a vacation can change your perspective.**

Despite how much time and planning it takes, once an even small vacation is over, it will be worth the effort. It doesn’t have to be a large trip – you don’t even have to leave the state—but when the payoff happens, it can add new shades of color to your vision. I took a trip up north this past July. It rejuvenated me, while also giving me perspective into where I want my life to take me next. Obvious as it may seem, when it feels like death, taxes and classes are the only constants in life, the ability to separate yourself is invaluable.

**Vacation not possible? There’s an answer for that.**

It’s almost childish, really, but a regularity of hobbies and activities can help get you through some tough times. Ironically enough, Metro State might even have a club for such a hobby. Sharing those hobbies with people can even out one’s mood and create a healthy dissonance from a constant barrage of work and stress. Personally, I enjoy activities that either bring people closer together or in which I am a part of creation. Feeling productive while doing what I love is honestly one of the great experiences of my life.

**If all else fails, try again—no, seriously.**

Work will pile up. Pressure will increase. But, when the opportunity arises, even if it passes by, there will be another time to take advantage. Paradise is where you make it. The difficulty may come from external forces, but you are the ultimate key holder.

Best Wishes,

Brayden Mann