

Hello, my name is Albert Collazo. I am a 30-year-old single parent of a five-year-old boy. I work full time as a mechanical integrity inspector after five years serving in the Army. I am up at 5 a.m. at work by 7 a.m., home by 5 p.m., and if everything goes as planned, in bed by 10 p.m. It rarely ever works out that way though.

My short term goal is simply to take everything one day at a time and do my best in school while being a good parent and employee. My daily thoughts consist of whether or not I packed my sons lunch, if my bills are paid, if my homework is finished, and if that report at work is completed. If all those boxes are checked, then I have about 50 more to check by the end of the day.

My long term goals are to change my career to one in development, and possibly collaborate with friends I have in the art and design world. I originally went to school for animation but dropped out due to some economic issues, but now those issues shouldn't be a problem, and I am able to go to school without the worry of cost.

The challenges I perceive happening this month have nothing to do with the class. I am currently in the middle of moving for the second time this year. The move was unexpected (I only found out I had to move a week ago) and I am now working, being a parent, moving, and doing school all at once with very little help. It's stressful at the moment but I think I'll be finished with the move in the next week or two.

The challenges I think I'll have with my dream mainly have to do with getting discouraged. I have to keep my head up and keep moving. Sometimes I take a bad grade or negative criticism too hard and start to come down on myself. I really need to keep reminding myself that I have to fail in order to get better.

Honestly, there is no single quote that motivates me or gets me going when things are tough, but there are people who inspire me. One is my best friend that I went to animation school with. I remember how he would stay up all hours of the night with a pot of coffee working as hard as he could on his homework hours after I gave up and went to sleep. He's now very successful and still works as hard as he did in college. Thinking about the amount of dedication he has always inspires me to keep going even when I want to quit, because I know he wouldn't.