How I arrived at Colorado Mesa is definitely an interesting story. I applied to 12 different esteemed engineering schools across the nation, ranging from Florida Tech, Michigan Tech, to my top choice—Colorado School of Mines. After being accepted to all but one, I was left with the tough decision. My heart had been set on Colorado School of Mines for quite some time, I accepted my enrollment and starting planning my dream college experience. However after a visit to the financial aid department during my college visit over Spring break of my junior year, it became apparent that there would be no way I could afford to attend my dream university. Feeling heartbroken and extremely discouraged, I rescinded my confirmation and started researching other possible schools, as I couldn’t see myself at the other universities I was accepted at after the disappointment of Mines’ expenses—none of the other schools were worth the amount of money they were asking for, I felt. The last thing I wanted to do was stay in my home state of Minnesota, I wanted to do something new—experience things I had never gotten the chance to experience.

I applied to Colorado Mesa in a hotel lobby on a school field trip. The application took me about 15 minutes and I heard back within 3 days. With the tuition program Colorado Mesa offers, I would be paying a very small fraction of the cost that Colorado School of Mines requested—actually, by attending here, I was saving money as opposed to attending the University my family initially hoped I would attend, University of Minnesota Twin Cities. So, having believed I found a good fit for me, I confirmed my enrollment for fall of 2017, for the second time. I had never visited the campus, or even the Western Slope. Having just visited a few months prior to my confirmation, there wasn’t another opportunity for me to come down before the new school year started—move in day would be my only campus orientation day.

Now, here we are, three months later and I could not have been happier with my—very spontaneous, unplanned, and unexpected—decision to move here. I have met wonderful friends that I now cannot imagine never having met. I have met a significant other, who I have found great comfort, fun, and happiness with. Being spontaneous with my college decision has allowed me to have experienced moments that I will remember and cherish forever.

After making this change, and committing to this path I have seen many positive impacts in my life. I, myself, have started making more spontaneous decisions and tried to live life less planned. Having struggled with some control issues, as many have, trying to become more easy-going has made significant ripple-effects on the people and situations around me. I truly believe that taking an active role in being more spontaneous and going with the flow can, in innumerable ways, positively change one’s life.

Being more spontaneous can help your interpersonal relationships immensely. No one wants to associate with someone who is overly stiff, mannered, formal, rigid, or over-controlling. No one wants to try and connect with someone who is unwilling to experience feeling and emotion wholeheartedly-- to truly and 100% be in the moment. And no one wants to spend time with someone who is unwilling to act without planning, to live without a schedule or itinerary.

We already live in a wheel of repetitive lifestyles and routines. During my senior year of high school I had the opportunity to earn an internship at Target Headquarters. I worked there Monday through Friday for half the day throughout my senior year, then during the summer full time. I became acclimated to the routine of adult-life in big-business—attend the meetings, file the paperwork, and gossip endlessly about your coworkers. Not much happens that is unexpected, and not much happens that significantly matters either. With few vacation days and few changes in structure, my coworkers often got caught in a cycle of boredom and dissatisfaction. As an intern, people rant to you. I saw firsthand the stresses of remaining unchallenged, disengaged, and monotony. My coworkers would make routines to make it through the day, routines that followed after more routines that followed after more routines.

Alifeofblue.com discusses how routines create structure, therefore leaving you feeling more ordered and calm. It also discusses how keeping certain routines in place conserve your energy for things that are “important.” However, what happens when your routines that are easing the chaos and complications from your life, are also draining it of the excitement and trapping yourself in a lazy, boring, unmemorable existence.

The American Psychological Association in August of 2013 published an article discussing boredom and its negative repercussions on mental health. It is stated that adding chronic dissatisfaction with activities and situations can lead people to engage in risky and impulsive behaviors. Some of which were listed being drug abuse, gambling, and overeating. Switching up your routine and being more spontaneous can help distract you from these harmful urges.

Often times we feel pressured and bogged down by meaningless stresses. We feel it’s the “end of the world” when in the scheme of everything—it’s nowhere near it. In an article by Psych central it discusses the pattern of consequential inflexibility and dis-focus that strikes those who get wrapped up in the hamster-wheel of routine. In the repetitiveness of it all, it discusses how you are actually more likely to make performance errors and more likely to not be as productive versus if you were put into a situations that you were challenged by the new and unfamiliar repeatedly.

We are less creative if we are not challenged by the unknown. This is correlated back to us being engaged: mentally, situationally, and emotionally. What we are used to is easy. Medium.com discusses how a monotonous lifestyle can severely negatively impact your creative thinking. It discusses how the prevention of your mind from responding to any new and unfamiliar external stimuli and reinforcing it to old mental connections creates a mental block to creative thinking.

Being spontaneous can help you discover what you are truly passionate about. If you allow yourself to explore you can learn your true interests and what inspires you, personally. When you are focused on your schedule, routine, and norm, you fail to take notice of the beauty around you. Moving to Colorado from the Midwest, the mountains astound me every time I see them. However, for people that have lived here their whole life- they often say they are used to them, and don’t really notice them anymore. It’s so easy to get caught up in the hamster wheel of daily life, that sometimes you can’t even appreciate the gifts that surround you.

The joy of life is that we never truly know what’s going to happen next. With how things are going right now in the modern day, really any moment could be your last. We should embrace this. Surprises bring unforeseen adventure and experience- it takes you out of the routine. Raking risks and letting yourself experience new things freely is what allows us to grow and love, as spontaneously deciding to attend Colorado Mesa has done for me meeting my new close friends and significant other.

With nearly 100% of the class reporting in my Audience Analysis that they personally believe that spontaneity is good for your health, and none reporting that they believe it’s bad, the only question is why you wouldn’t be spontaneous? Though some say that spontaneity can sometimes mutate into impulsivity, there is a fine line between the two. Spontaneity may be unplanned action, but is far from being done thoughtlessly. Spontaneity is based on a quick assessment that the intended course of action is in accordance with one’s value and beliefs. Whereas impulsivity is done without thought or regard to values, beliefs, and often health according to an article published by Financial Times.

I ask you to think, how often do your plans really work out the way you want them to anyway? Time is a human concept and we should become more lax with the idea of living in the moment. We’re so focused on where we are going, we tend to overlook where we are- the present. Trying to predict the future is impossible, so going with the flow is really the only logical solution. You are less stressed, happier, and more flexible.

Spontaneity is our gift given to us as humans; our ability to exercise our right of free will and explore our surroundings. According to Henry Van Dyke, renowned American author and educator, “As long as habit and routine dictate the pattern of living, new dimensions of the soul will not emerge.” We must break from the binds of a mindless and monotonous society and release ourselves to experience the universe as we were put here to- wildly and without instructions or plan. An article published by The Odyssey gives a few of the millions of ways to make your life more spontaneous, go meet new people, allow yourself to be open to new opportunities, travel to new places and explore new things, allow your curiosity to explore the wonders of the world.