

Value Village. They have a loyalty program there. Also, you can buy four books and get one free. And if you love books like me, but hate renting from the library and parting from your novels, give their rotating selection a go!

On the note of books, studying at the public library is a great way to avoid spending money at cafes like Starbucks. While coffee can be helpful for students to focus and stay alert, make it at home and bring it to a place without temptations. Also, why do they insist on playing shitty “indie” playlists twice as loudly as they should be? Who are they trying to impress? The library has an amazing ambience that encourages working and doesn’t have Mac DeMarco blaring all around you. CNC’s library is closer, but I find that there are more distractions. Up to you, though.

Some other little hacks to save money at school: park in the street! The parking lot is expensive. Get your daily steps in by showing up 5 to 10 minutes earlier and parking either on 22nd, Nicholson, or 18th Ave. I’ve saved about \$800 just by doing this. Also, bring your own reusable containers for either water or hot beverages. You get a discount for coffees and teas if you use your own mug. I know it just isn’t practical to suggest that students will not get their caffeine fix. Just do it with finesse. Make sure you check in with the Students’ Union for information on insurance and the U-Pass. I knew nothing about these benefits that I paid for with my tuition. Utilize what you have at the college! Save some moolah. I got my glasses reimbursed so of course I bought two more. (I never said I was a TLC channel coupon clipper, okay?)

Side note: I grew up obsessed with impressing people. If you’re anything like me, you succeeded in elementary and high school, and found that post-secondary is a whole other rodeo. Indeed, it is twice the amount of work with half the time in which to do it. When life turned sideways at the start of my last semester here and I began to struggle in an English class, the course in which I find the most joy, I realized that maybe that particular class just was not for me. And you know what? It is okay to walk away from a course, a person, whatever that makes you unhappy. I wish someone had told me this at that time. So now I’m telling you. The legend RuPaul says, “if you can’t love yourself, how in the hell are you gonna love somebody else?” Remember that!

I would like to end this on a positive note. College is an amazing opportunity to grow as a person and a scholar. The faculty at CNC are some of the most genuine, empathetic people I have ever met. Take the time to speak with your instructors and your classmates. While keeping up with your studies is important, remember that you are only here for a certain amount of time. A C on a midterm is not the end of the world. Take these stumbles and motivate yourself to study harder. If testing is not your strong suit, work hard on assignments and presentations. Remember to take a break once in a while. Treat yourself, just not too much. Most importantly, be kind to yourself and others.

3. If it doesn’t spark joy, get rid of it!

That dickhead friend that always asks you for rides and never pays you gas money, only messages back an “aw that sucks☹” when you send a paragraph-long rant about someone, and belittles your interests? Bye. A significant other that does not put you first? Peace out. Self-sabotaging behaviours like staying up too late watching “one more episode” or buying a textbook but not taking off the plastic wrap? It needs to stop!