

For my self intervention of Choice, I have decided to not speak my first language (Chinese) for a week. Because it is thanks-giving week and I am staying at school, I think it is a good opportunity to do this intervention.

It was not that bad at the beginning. I talked with my friends in English and sometimes texted my friends in Chinese. However, It became worse as time went. I felt the deep loneliness and homesick. Since I have been in the United States for 2 years, I haven't tried to not speak Chinese for 2 days. This is a real challenge. My feeling cannot output correctly and I couldn't be real me with the language system which I am familiar with. I believe lots of people who has experienced a long -term international travel will feel the similarity. The excitement and "challenge myself feeling " is faded in time and only unspeakable bitter left. Moreover, I realize how important the healthy communication it is for a mentally healthy human being.

I originally planned to go to my regular grocery store and buy as little plastic as possible. However, I want to try to go absolutely zero waste for a week of grocery shopping and then set achievable goals from there on out that move towards eventual zero (very low) waste. I will shop at the farmers market and SLO food co-op and buy nothing with any kind of waste (plastic, trays, stickers, twist ties, etc). It will be interesting to see if I can find things such as tofu or cheese without any sort of wrapping. I will do my best to explore as many food buying options as possible so that I can find places that will make it easier for me to maintain a low waste lifestyle after the first week. This is something that I have been wanting to do for a while, as I feel (what I believe to be reasonable) guilt when I throw food waste away. Furthermore, I will see what I can do to swap out my toiletry and self care items out as they run out, but this will happen as time goes on (seeing as it makes no sense to throw things away if they aren't entirely used up).

For my mental health and self awareness I will make a daily effort to meditate. I know based on past experience that meditation provides me with increased awareness of who I am, why I feel what I do, and how I can better understand the people and the world around me. I have the Headspace app and will be using it to encourage this daily meditation and to track my consistency. I notice a significant difference in my well-being and in the way that I treat others with a consistent practice.

Update: This is hard, but I feel good. I went to the co-op and was able to purchase produce and bulk grains without any kind of packaging (instead I bought some reusable cotton produce bags from them) and made a really good dinner out of it. However, things like nut or oat milk are virtually impossible to find without packaging, I really think the only way to make that happen is to make it yourself, which I will definitely give a shot. I couldn't find any cheese or tofu without plastic so I opted for vegan meals this week and will see what I can find that is low waste (maybe at the SLO farmers market) for the future. It was a challenge but I'm really excited that this intervention gave the push I needed to say no to the typical Trader Joe's run and instead try something unfamiliar.

I also have been trying to meditate but some mornings find it hard to get up and do it first thing. I think I will explore different times of the morning and see what works best for me. I also

purchased a book from HumanKind downtown called How To See by Zen Master Thich Nhat Nahn and have been reading a page every morning which has been a radically better way to start my day than waking up and immediately going on social media or beginning to worry about what the day holds.

My life appears to me as one constant self-intervention. So again, I didn't do anything special for the class, but I have plenty to report on. Maybe my biggest adjustment is figuring out how to become the father I want to be to the boy I adopted after marrying his mama. As we divorce, I have the challenge/opportunity to become a father in a way that wasn't possible when his mama and I were together. It's rough. Usually when restricting access to the internet (I've reconnected the WiFi), he screams obscenities and throws things at me, hits me, and damages stuff if I leave the room. I took to putting him outside when he damaging, and sometimes holding him on the porch until we negotiate a way inside. It requires physically forcing him out the door. The counselor tells me I can't do this. She's very critical of me.... But I don't pay her to tell me what I want to hear, so I try to learn from her. She advocates for a less direct route. If I snatch away his device, an explosion will likely ensure. However, he knows that if he doesn't surrender his screen, then likely the device will disappear the next day. She says I can't *control* his behavior, but there are *consequences*.... Allowing him to choose his behavior subject to the consequences. For the past two weeks, I've been mindful of the need to be patient with imposing... structure? Rules?... and letting him make his decisions. It's gone OK... I haven't gotten hit in the two weeks since that meeting with the counselor. We've even had some fun a few times.

For my final intervention of choice I decided not to watch any TV or play video games. I don't play many video games in the first place but I do watch tv at night a lot before I go to bed. Over this last week I had off for Thanksgiving break and put this intervention to the test. It was hard at first when I would walk downstairs for breakfast and my parents would have the TV on. I started eating breakfast in the backyard which I found as a good way to start my morning. It would wake me up a bit more and I could watch the sky light up and listen to the birds chirp. On the other hand, at night I felt almost the need to watch The Office in order to settle down. But I forced myself to read instead. I found that reading puts me to sleep just as fast as watching TV. Sometimes it would cause me to read the same page a few times, through heavy eyelids but I ended up finishing a book over the break and that felt like an accomplishment. In conclusion this was a great intervention and I will implement it more in the future.

For my personal intervention, I decided to call a friend every day who I don't see very much anymore. For some reason, I feel a bit of a mental block on doing this normally, imagining that it'll be awkward or something. But it really never is and I always enjoy reconnecting with people. This intervention was very fun and helped me overcome that mental block.

My "global citizen" intervention was to time my showers. Water doesn't seem like the most important resource that I use, but as a California resident I should definitely have more respect for water as a resource. This intervention helped me become much more aware of my water use. I was imagining it would become this race for me every day to see how quickly I could shower,

eventually getting it down to ridiculously low times. However, the pressure of school has been pretty immense for me this quarter and I've been kind of depressed, which makes my showers much longer. Maybe I'll return to this intervention another time and see how low I can get it. Still, now I have a much better idea of how much water I use while showering. Now I should calculate the flow rate of the shower head and see how much water I use by quantity.

For this assignment, I chose to delete all forms of social media on my phone. I had a hard time choosing what I wanted to do for my self intervention, but while I was thinking about it I realized that my phone consumes most of my free time. I decided to do this over thanksgiving break, not knowing how difficult it would be due to the fact that I had so much free time on my hands. At first, I would go on my phone to go open instagram or snapchat and then I would realize that I had deleted the apps – a good reminder of this project. Once a few days had gone by, I stopped thinking about social media as a whole. Never once did I feel like I was missing out. By the time thanksgiving rolled around, I was leaving my phone in my room all day and just enjoying time with family and friends. It was nice to get a break from being attached to a screen all day long, and I found it to be a lot easier than I thought it would be. I think that deleting social media helped me be more in touch with what was going on around me and pay more attention to the people I care about. I definitely would recommend for people to do this, it really clears ones mind and makes you focus on things bigger than social media.

I remember first hearing about the Amazon fire burning rapidly when I was visiting Dubai over the summer. Being so far away from the situation, I felt like I was in a bubble. The people around me were not panicking, the airport traffic was moving slow without much concern about the state of the planet. While I appeared to be calm on the outside, inside I was mad and anxious. What does this mean for our future? What can I do? I thought about everything I did that contributed to my carbon footprint. Flying on a plane was definitely one of them. However, I realized that I could not give that up, how was I supposed to get home or travel to other places in the future? I realized that the things that I could change was my diet and energy usage. So I promised to do anything I could to help on my end. I went vegan. And when people ask why, I always reply for the environment. It was not as difficult of a transition than I thought. I was already a vegetarian (and had been for most of my life) however maintaining it over the last three months was harder than I thought. It took a lot of discipline, especially on the tough days where all I wanted was to eat pizza and ice cream. Explaining to my parents my dietary restrictions was also a very tough transition, they believed that I would not get enough adequate nutrition. Ironically, I found myself eating more vegetables and home cooked meals. I think that looking back in the few months and reevaluating how I wanted to contribute to the world was a great motivation for keeping me on track. This unintentional self-intervention may not help save the amazon, but helps me consciously thinking about the planet and its state. I plan on continuing this intervention for as long as I can. Doing this small step makes me feel better (not completely happy) but in a better state than the alternative.

For my final self-intervention, I chose to go vegetarian for a week. I chose this because I realize the environmental impact of a diet that contains meat, and how removing meat from your diet can help curb carbon emissions related to global warming. I also thought that it might be a move in the healthier direction for myself, because I eat too much meat and not enough veggies, so this intervention would almost force me to eat more vegetables.

This intervention turned out to be a lot harder than I was expecting. Not because it's hard for me to change my consumption habits, but because it was during thanksgiving break. And I love thanksgiving food—Turkey, gravy, ham. However, I'm proud to say I was able to tough it out and stick to my goal and chose not to eat these foods during thanksgiving dinner. I did get weird looks from my family, mostly because I usually eat these foods (and because they spent a lot of time making them). After explaining to them my self-intervention, they seemed to understand for the most part. After thanksgiving I was tempted to submit and finally eat some meaty leftovers, but I finished the week without them.

This self-intervention taught me that changing your diet can be a challenging experience, but it's not impossible. It also made me realize how much darn meat I eat. Do I think that I could fully commit to being a vegetarian? Maybe for a year or two if I really tried. But even if it doesn't become my main diet, I think that at least trying to eat less meat would be a step in the right direction.

For this intervention, I had no idea what to choose. Then I realized that one of my roommates recently took a break from social media and I noticed she seemed to be a lot more relaxed. So I decided I was going to take a break from Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. I spend a lot of time on LinkedIn which I now realized, it stresses me out, it's pretty addicting. It has been 6 days since I have used these social media accounts. I feel better, I am not on my phone as much and I catch myself communicating with people more. I think I am communicating with people more because I am not seeing everything that they are constantly posting, so we tend to talk about more things. I have a lot more free time now, I recently started reading more. I think I get bored when I am around my friends because they are on their phones so I go outside and read my book. Another change I noticed is that I go to bed earlier and I sleep so much better. I used to be on my phone constantly before bed, scrolling and scrolling. Now I read a book before bed and I feel tired around 11 pm before I used to stay up well past midnight. It is definitely hard because everyone is constantly either on social media or talking about it. I think I will probably go back on it but I know now what amount is healthy because of the break I took. I think every now and then I will probably go "off the grid" just to take a second or a week to refresh and re focus.

For my final self-intervention, I wanted to not just focus on my personal goals to live healthier and be more productive, but also on adjusting my lifestyle to have less of a negative impact on our planet.

One of the lifestyle improvements I have been wanting to make for a long time is going to the gym every single night. So for this intervention, I created a weekly workout plan that involves going to the on campus recreation center every night. I followed this plan for three weeks and am glad to report that I am and will be continuing this for the foreseeable future. Another personal change I wanted to make is not having my phone with me while doing homework or studying, so that I can be more productive with my time and subsequently have more time to focus on my health. This worked great for me for two weeks, however I eventually realized that there are certain times when I absolutely need to have my phone on hand. Despite this, I plan on continuing to at least work without the distraction of my phone whenever possible. This allowed me to focus more on things like eating three meals a day, which is very important to getting enough nutrients on a regular basis.

When it comes to reducing my negative environmental impacts, I focused on driving less and eating less meat. I realized that the emissions of my gas-vehicle are significant and I often abuse the fact that I own a car by driving even for short distances and driving to school despite living under 20 minutes away by foot. Also, I know that the impact mass meat farming on the environment is alarmingly bad and I wanted to support that as little as possible. I made it a point to only drive for things that were more than a 20 minute walk away and to only walk to and from school. These changes were also beneficial for my health, as I became more active. I hope to minimize my unnecessary driving in the future as much as possible. In addition, I tried to incorporate as much plant-based food as I could into my diet to phase out things like beef and chicken. I hope to continue this by finding alternative sources of protein, as that is still very important for my body.

It was difficult for me to come up with something good to do for the final intervention, because I already do some of the examples like I hardly drive my car and I've been a vegetarian for over 10 years and end up eating vegan a lot of the time. Also everything I was thinking of didn't seem "big" enough and seemed a little selfish since the changes would benefit me and not so much the environment. In the end I decided to combine a few ideas. So for my final intervention, for a week I decided to walk home from school everyday, workout everyday (no matter how brief it would have to be), dance a little everyday, and not use any plastic baggies.

The walking, working out, and no baggies were all things I originally thought about when brainstorming for this final intervention but the dancing everyday for a week came about on its own. One morning I had a little extra time to get ready so I played some music and danced around. It gave me energy and I felt happier after so I thought that would be a perfect thing to add to my daily routine in order to better my life through this intervention.

Walking home from school everyday was nice. I always enjoy walking home for the exercise and fresh air, but it definitely was harder to make sure that I did it everyday. I have tried to walk home instead of taking the bus as much as possible before but sometimes I'd be too tired or it'd feel too cold. I was glad that I was able to stick to walking. I think the walking benefited myself and the environment because I was not taking part in the emissions produced by my car or the bus.

Working out everyday is something that I've wanted to do again for awhile but I haven't been able to find the time to put myself first. For the most part, my workouts for the week were in my house but I still definitely enjoyed them. It felt good to get a little extra movement going to break up doing all the school work I've had lately. Also it was fun to use the new exercise bands I got. I'm glad I had to make some time for myself to get moving more.

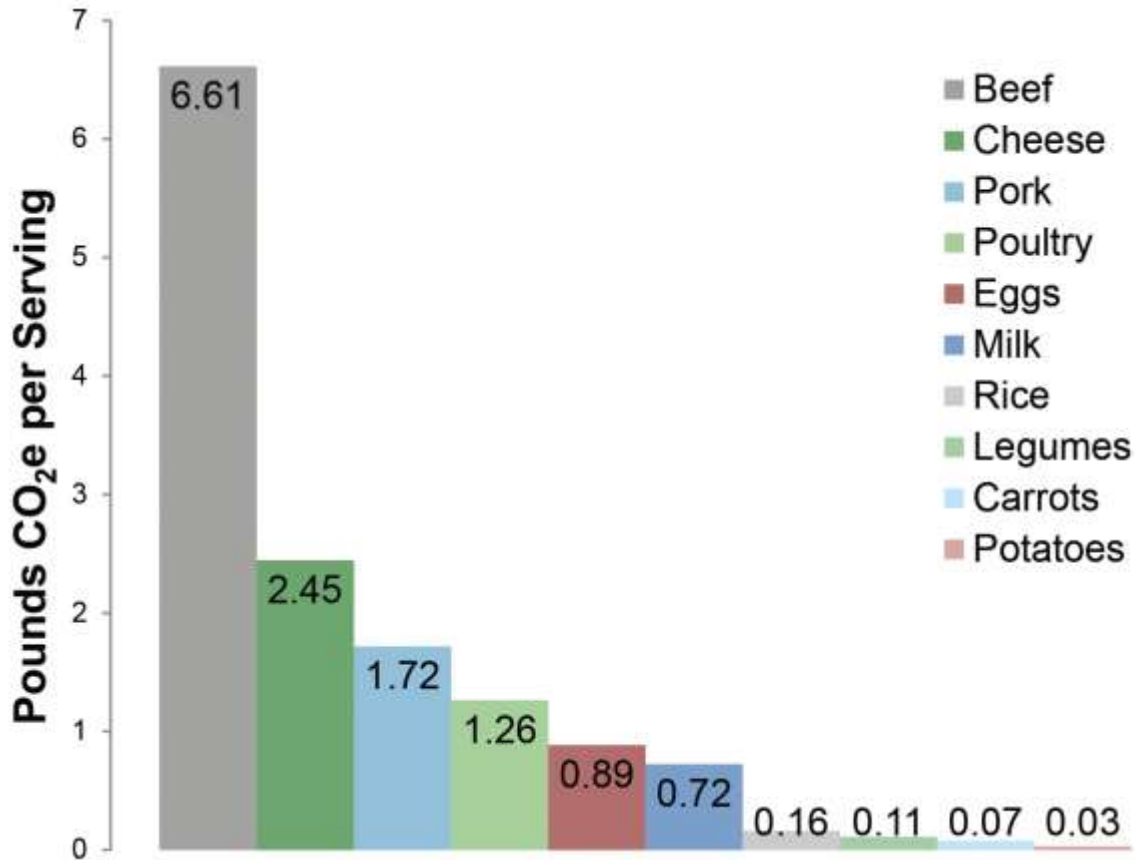
Not using plastic baggies for a week wasn't very hard to actually do but it did take additional time and thought. Whenever I take snacks to campus for the day I just toss them in plastic baggies without much thought. Instead, I had to find the right tupperware to put everything in, including a sandwich which a little more difficult with the options I had to choose from. It wasn't fun having my backpack stuffed more than usually with the containers but in the end I think it was worth it to make that change. It isn't too much to ask in order to reduce the amount of plastic waste I create.

Overall, I think the minor changes I came up with resulted in a positive intervention outcome. I enjoyed doing all of them and felt like I was living a better and happier life as well as doing a little bit to help improve the environment as well. Although I don't think I'll have much time these next few weeks to continue working out everyday and I don't really want to walk half an hour in the rain, I will try to continue my intervention activities as much as possible, especially not using plastic baggies. I also want to keep up the random dancing because it never hurts to have a little extra burst of happiness in my life.

I have this drawing I started freshman year here at Cal Poly and have told myself that I'd finish it on a weekend, on a break, or that I'd chip at it for a few minutes every day. But that hasn't happened in two years, because there's always been some kind of excuse I could come up with. For my self intervention, I want to take one week (maybe more?) to intentionally dedicate at *least* a half hour every day towards art. My goal is to not only finish that drawing, but to challenge myself to get the creative juices flowing again and use art as a way to decompress.

UPDATE: so, turns out I lost the drawing. I can't quite find it. I did, though, make the time during break to let my brain draw what it wanted, and it was so incredibly therapeutic. At first, I found myself being impatient and almost frustrated with not knowing where to start. But, all it took was a little music and looking through some of my photographs to find what I wanted to draw. While Week 10 is in full swing, I've still managed to continue to take time to doodle in my bullet journal during study breaks, rather than going on my phone. Maybe it's the placebo effect, maybe it's coffee, but I feel a lot less stressed out than I've been in the past going into finals.

For my self-intervention, I wanted to do something that would better myself and the environment. I decided to go a week without eating red meat. Every day, I usually have some type of red meat (beef and pork), be it bacon for breakfast, a burger for lunch, a steak for dinner or any other kind at any other time. Red meat produces more pounds of CO₂ equivalent per serving than many other kinds of food. The chart below demonstrates this.



Instead of red meat, I ate a lot more chicken and vegetables. Chicken is already a big part of my diet, but I've never really been big into vegetables. It took a few meals of getting used to, but I was able to find some decent ways of eating my veggies. After doing this self-intervention, I feel a bit healthier with my diet, and although it is by no means the biggest change to my carbon footprint that I could make, I'm glad I was able to minimize it a bit as well. I don't think I will completely give up red meat, but I will definitely try to reduce my consumption of it.

In choosing what my final self intervention may be, I wanted to focus on my mental health and well-being. I've noticed, as the weeks progressed, I've always been glued to my laptop or phone, working away. My mind never had a moment to rest! My day-to-day schedule says it perfectly:

- Wake up, walk to class (answer texts and emails that are unread on my phone)
- Get to class and whip open my laptop (work for 2-3 hours on school projects)
- Walk home from class (on my phone, again answering messages I've missed)
- Get home and whip open my laptop (to work for my internship, which is remote, and also all digital)
- Walk to my next class (on my phone)
- Get to my second class (more lecture based and laptop/phone are put away, yet I can't help myself and check up on messages and projects when I can)

- Walk home from class (on my phone)
- Get home, work on school projects (on my laptop) or work for my internship (on my laptop) until bed
- Sleep, for the next cycle of this...

And so, for the past week, I've made sure to make time to put away my electronics and enjoy the little minutes I have between working away. Every day to class, I had my phone on silence! This little change for the week really made a difference, as I enjoyed my walk to and fro, and also got to see so many familiar faces to say "Hi!" to. I even stopped, and got to catch up with old friends I hadn't seen, which I don't think actively being on my phone, preoccupied with messages and alerts, would have allowed.

I made other commitments inline with my self intervention. On Monday, I went on a run. Now, it's not out of my norm to go on an outdoor run. Out of my norm, is how I didn't *schedule* in my Apple calendar (yes, I'm one of those who *lives* by their calendar), nor did I bring my phone (for music and for tracking time). On Tuesday, I went to dinner with my friend Ruby, put my phone on silent and enjoyed catching up with her. It was a break from digital interaction, to real-life interaction. On Wednesday, I made reservations with a new friend (a new member in my sorority), and we did a spin/cycle class together! Although it was "scheduled," it was a break from always feeling like I'm working.

Overall, my self intervention the past week made me take the time to make these "little moments" and take a breather. I feel like taking breaks in-between and enjoying those breaks without worrying of what I still need to do made me more productive, coming back with a clear head, stress-free. I'd like to continue doing this in the future, I've seen the difference it can make, though small, has a large impact later.

For my third and final self-intervention for the course, I wanted to encourage myself to do something I've been meaning to do for a long time: take a chunk of time to reflect on the things I do and appreciate the things I have on a regular basis, and then challenge myself to improve what I do for others and myself a little bit each and every day. What this ended up becoming for my self-intervention was a Pay-it-Forward Journal: each night for a week, I reflected on the things that happened to me that day (either thanks to the goodwill of others, blind luck, or faith in my fellow humans) with a sense of gratitude, and challenged myself to "Pay it Forward" in a new way the next day, to either help someone else, society at large, or the planet in a small way.

My challenges ranged from environmental (like picking up the trash along my walking route back and forth to school, or only using things that could be reused for an entire day [harder than you might imagine, when you consider how just about any meal involves some sort of prepackaged ingredient]) to community-based (only buying things produced locally and sold by a small business) and involved both interacting directly with people (for one, I tried a day of "random acts of kindness," where I attempted to do small, unexpected kindnesses for the people around me) and flying under-the-radar (on another day, my goal was to clean up other peoples' messes as I went about my day). In total, these seven "mini-challenges" pushed me to think

about how the small, everyday actions we take and the decisions we make all the time—whether or not to walk by that piece of trash, or if we step up and engage with the person we usually just brush past getting our afternoon coffee—can really change both your outlook on the world around you, and, in turn, how the world around us actually is.

By leaving a trail of little positive breadcrumbs, I actually found myself more appreciative of the things that I normally take for granted, hence the second part of each day's journal entry: reflecting on what I was grateful for in my life. What stood out to me the most during the part of each day set aside for reflection was how important the seemingly insignificant parts of my day actually were to my happiness. Looking back through my entries while writing this post up, I was surprised by how many of the things I noted that I appreciated were rather small, everyday items: interactions with my coworkers, or a simple phone call back home. On one day, I even wrote down how grateful I was for a really fantastic meal I'd had that I normally wouldn't have even thought twice about, much less written about.

At the end of it all, I guess I'm not sure how much of an impact my small daily challenges made on the people around me—I'd like to think they did some good, though. What I am sure of is how those little rituals (and my nightly reflections) made an impact on me: by making me more appreciative of what I have and forcing me to engage more in the world around me, my Pay it Forward Journal intervention is something that made a difference in my week, and is something that I hope I can continue to challenge myself to do at various points in the future, too. There's something to be said for the power of reflection, and there's something to be said for people making small changes to help leave the world around them just a little bit better than they found it.

When choosing the intervention, I had to reflect on my own life and see where I can improve. One thing that I've noticed, is my tendency to go, go, go every day and not really appreciate the present. When I have time, I really enjoy journaling which includes writing about my thoughts and feelings. But in all honesty, I rarely get to do this because I wake up pretty rushed, go about my school/workday, do homework, socialize, and go to sleep. There never seems to be time for just sitting and writing in my journal. This past week I decided to journal every night or sometimes even during the day. I brought my journal in my school backpack so I have it at all moments. No matter how late it was in the day, I really made an effort to write. Some things I wrote about include: what I did that day, what are things that are bothering me, what are things that I'm excited about, and how I can see those negative emotions in a positive way. Because I was able to journal for a whole week, I felt very self-aware. When you look at your mood throughout that day, you can see how your actions are affected by them (whether that be a good thing or a bad thing). For me, I was dealing with a concussion so I found myself pretty short-tempered and not really present during my conversations and activities. But because I consciously recognized those feelings, I was more cautious especially when interacting with other people. This self intervention doesn't only affect me. It affects the people I interact with. When I am in a good mood, being active in the conversation, and being fully present, I find the people I interact with to be the same. But if I'm kind of down, easily distracted, and not really talkative, I find them to do the same. And who knows, maybe they carry that mood when they talk to others...It's a chain reaction.

For my intervention, I chose to limit the use of my phone before going to bed every night. This past quarter I've noticed that I tend to stay up late just scrolling through social media. This has resulted in loss of sleep and productivity. Along with the feeling of being attached to something that seems to take away from more important activities, since it is forming a bad habit. To implement this, I would put my phone away two hours before I was planning on going to sleep. I would put my phone in a dresser drawer that is out of reach from my bed, so I wouldn't have the urge to grab it if I couldn't sleep. The first night was tough, I constantly had the urge to check all of my social media. It wasn't until the 3rd night where I could tell I didn't have the urge to need my phone. This intervention has taught me it's important to detach from technology. As a result from this intervention I am sleeping a lot better since I'm not waking up in the middle of the night and feeling wide awake in the morning.

I have always found it hard to say no to any sort of fun things in fear of missing out, or to helping people out even if that cut down on my personal time or capacity. In the beginning, this was not a problem, but as my work load, responsibilities and loads increased, this "habit" of mine became somewhat unbearable at times. So, for my intervention, I decided to start saying no when needed. In the first few days, it was not easy because I would feel bad for saying no to people. But afterwards, I started feeling somewhat relieved and like some loads have been taken off my shoulders. It was great. Moving forward, I will try to keep that balance of knowing when to say no for my own sanity's sake.

I've developed a bad habit of not making time to reach out to people close to me. This has developed into some extreme cases, where I've gone weeks having not called or talked to members in my family (most of my direct and indirect family live really far away (in another country or state) so the distance has been difficult, or years without talking to close friends. This has definitely been a strain on my relationships with people, and has developed out of a bad habit of me always perceiving that I am too busy to make time for people. As I'm getting closer to graduation in 3 weeks, I'm starting to realize that this habit would likely translate into my post-graduation life, and I would like to take steps to stop this before I lose more friend and contact with family.

For my intervention, I want to reach out to at least 1 person I haven't talked to in a while everyday and have a video or in-person conversation with that person. I hope to continue this intervention well-into the future, because I've been doing a pretty poor job at maintaining my relationship with friends and family.

For my intervention, I decided to focus on fixing my procrastination habits. These habits not only occur for school work but in daily life as well, doing laundry, working out, etc. So for my intervention, I decided I would do tasks/activities as I thought of them. For instance, if I thought about cleaning my room I would do it right then, rather than postponing the cleaning until later in the day or even days later. I utilized this intervention for health activities as well. I recently decided I wanted to start doing at least

one hike a week as part of my workout routine. So on Saturday I woke up and thought that it was really nice out so I called some friends to see if they wanted to go hike bishops and they all declined. Normally I would bail on my plan to exercise but instead, I went and hiked bishops by myself. I applied this get it done mindset to my homework throughout the week and finished a week's worth of homework by Tuesday so I was basically free the remaining days of the school week. That seemed really nice and a lot less stressful. This intervention is starting to give me the 'go do it' or 'say yes' mentality and I like it. I feel much more productive throughout the week and hopefully, this mindset will help lead to greater things in life.

Recently, I have noticed that I am becoming lazier when it comes to prepping meals for the week or making food for myself. I was looking through my expenses from the beginning of this quarter up until now and have noticed that I spent twice as much money at coffee houses and restaurants than I did on groceries! No wonder my bank statements looked so sad.

I realized this was the case because this past summer was the first time I worked a full-time job in a city where the minimum wage was much higher than at any of my other jobs before. Maybe for that reason or the fact that my bank account suddenly had a lot more money in it, I thought I had become independent and could now start getting used to luxuries like buying fancy coffee everyday.

So, for my self intervention, I decided to go a week without spending any money on food outside of groceries. I disabled Apple Pay and removed card details from my phone. I left my debit card and credit card on my desk and came to school without any cash or cards so I really had no way to pay for anything. Not going to lie, I did reach into my wallet and started walking towards Julians multiple times this week but I got used to it after three days of not having a source of money.

My weekly expenses from this past week look very different from three weeks ago. Not spending \$50 on coffee and food per week changed the average expenditure significantly! I realized that this intervention allowed me to:

1. Spend time cooking which is a great break from studying so now I feel more productive than ever before
2. Try new recipes to make for meals which I was probably too lazy to try before
3. I could now put the money I saved into my savings account, which has never looked so good!

More than any of the reasons mentioned above, I feel like I have become a little more independent for having realized what was wrong and trying to fix it and that, to me is a big achievement!

This has been a busy quarter for me. In order to make time for school, work, and a social life, I have neglected my own self-care and mental health. This week for my self-choice intervention I decided to commit to walking everyday outside by myself to reflect...on anything really. At the beginning of this

intervention, I was hoping to feel more centered with myself and less stressed out by my daily tasks. The first day was definitely the hardest. During my walk, I could only think about more productive things I could have been doing with my time.. like studying for my midterm or applying for scholarships. Regardless of my failure to reconnect with myself on the first day, I kept going with my self-intervention. From this, I found that it got easier to let go of self expectations, and just enjoy my own company. Now that I have finished my intervention I can say that I feel more free. I hope carry this intervention into my everyday life, and continue to better my relationship with myself.

For my self intervention, I chose to cut down on my daily wasted time on electronics. I instead substituted the gaps in my day that are normally used for mindless activity for creative/rewarding activities that I enjoy, but never 'find' the time to do normally. This included reading and drawing/painting. Both of these are activities that I have always enjoyed, but rarely manage to do while I'm in school. Normally, during my breaks between classes and time before going to bed, I'll be on my phone looking at instagram or reddit for far longer than I should. For this week, I decided to read or draw any time I had a break and felt like looking at my phone. I hoped that this would make me appreciate how it is possible to relax while doing something personally productive. At the beginning of the week, I found myself questioning whether I was truly relaxing as these activities still partially felt like some work, albeit work that I enjoyed far more. However, it didn't take long for me to really start looking forward to these breaks where I would either be able to continue my reading, or get a chance to draw. I found that both activities (I would alternate each time) were far more effective at helping me temporarily take my mind off of what was stressing me out. This has proven to me that, even with relaxing, the easiest option is not always the best. I have also come to appreciate just how much you can accomplish by maximizing the free space in your day, as I am able to say I've read this many pages or drawn this much over the course of a single week, whereas I would have nothing to show for that amount of time spent on my phone. This also reminds me of what I used to do before owning a phone or laptop during my free time. After this week, although I won't be as strict with how little I use my phone, I believe I'm going to be more proficient with how I spend my free time.

My inspiration for my self intervention came to me on my walk home from class. It was dark already, as it has been these days and I was listening to my favorite podcast. This podcast is an amazing true crime podcast that is fascinating, and the two women on the podcast were talking about complaining. As they were discussing how they complain a lot but don't know how to compete with the reaction to do so and the cognitive dissonance from the complaining and the knowledge of their own privilege. And that reminded me of this class and the self intervention. So I decided my self intervention for this past weeks was to not complain. At first I was ecstatic. I thought it wouldn't be that hard, easy maybe, because I really have an amazing beautiful life that I am so incredibly grateful for. I have incredible privilege. And I have Guilt attached to that privilege. So I thought. Lets give it a try.

I found out quickly how hard it would be. Within the first hour I had complained about being hungry, tired and stressed. This immediately made me question how I was going to be able to do this. It was almost like it was an automatic response. It made me think about what actually qualifies as complaining. When faced with the constant question, How are you? you either say good, or you are honest. "I'm tired" is a response to a question, or is it you complaining about the fact that you are tired, or hungry, or

stressed. And it made me realize that you are just being honest. Your guttural bare emotions don't know of your privilege. They are not internally ranked against every other soul on this earth's actions and lives. Your emotions and your privilege coexist simultaneously, but separately. So I decided I wanted to see if I could train them to exist a little less separate.

For the rest of the week I attempted to do just that. When feeling and emotion about some aspect of my life that was negative, I acknowledged it. "this is the truth this is how I feel", and then try to move past it. If I complained and didn't realize it, I tried to catch myself, or merely put myself in a more aware headspace. Instead of feeling guilty, I would do one action or think one conscious thought of how I can live in the way that coincides with my values. I wanted to validate my own emotions of not just my own day to day grind and struggle with mental health, but also my guilt. By addressing both I could consciously bring positivity to the line of thought.

This entire week was very challenging, and emotionally exhausting. The question of "what are you complaining about?" has always had the connotation of "there are so many people who have it worse than you." And that is true, but it is unfair to subject yourself to too much of that guilt. The truth is, the less cognitive dissonance you have, the less guilt you will feel. It's okay to not be having a great time, and just because I am privileged, does not mean I am granted automatic happiness. But it is important to be aware of what makes you feel guilty. The things that make you feel most guilty will most likely be the things that are easiest for you to do something about. So instead of "what are you complaining about", ask "what for", ask "why" ask yourself what you can do to change your own situation. Validate yourself but do not pity yourself, and live as consistently as possible to your creed. A conscious mind is the first step. And most of all don't be too hard on yourself.

For my final self intervention, I chose to document my lies and then reflect on the experience. I chose to do this because I am a person who strives for perfection, but I am also non-confrontational so I wanted to see how often I willfully deceive people in order to seemingly make a situation better. I think this fits in the context of this class because like the drowning kid in a pond, we can say we'll help them if they're here, but then we are unwilling to help them when they are across the world, so I wanted to see what conditions change my ability to be unwilling to "save the child" and tell the truth.

This experience was hard for me. I am a person who strives for perfection (which in this case I'd consider being a perfectly honest person), but I am also a person who is extremely non-confrontational. Because of this, I found myself telling white lies to avoid confrontation, but then also being very down on myself because I had to recognize that I told a lie, and therefore was not a perfect person. Because of this, I cried multiple times within this two day period.

Over the two days, I only lied four times. Three of these times, it was in person and once, over email. The one time I lied over email, it was to my boss. I will likely have to follow up with the same lie in person, but it contains an element of truth and I've already prefaced my lie with an email, so the "what the hell effect" Ariely proposes will make it much easier to lie in person. In the other three cases, one was to a stranger, one was to my roommate, and one was to a sorority sister I'm not super close with. It was by far the easiest to lie to a stranger. I told a boy I wasn't going out, and at the time, I didn't plan on it, but later changed my mind. I didn't feel bad about

this one because I felt no obligation to this boy to go out, and these are decisions are ones that can be made last minute, so this was an easy thing for me to lie about in the end. Lying to my roommate also seemed justified to me. I told her I needed her to clean for an event, but in reality, she had made our apartment a mess the previous night and I just wanted a reason to ask her to clean. Because I'm non-confrontational, simply saying, "you made a mess last night and need to clean" is no easy feat for me. Giving a false reason for the necessity to clean was much easier and the job ended up being done. The hardest by far was my last lie to my sorority sister. We had a philanthropy event and I had originally said I was not okay with people cooking in my apartment. When 5:30 came around, she came into my room with a griddle and in an effort to be truthful, I said, "Oh, I thought we weren't cooking in here," but when she responded that she could ask the person in charge about it, I lied and said, "Don't worry about it, it's fine." I spent the rest of the night being annoyed as a result of my lie, and the news that I was mad about people cooking in my apartment ended up reaching the person in charge anyways, so I could've easily voiced my opinion earlier and not have had to lie or be annoyed for the night.

Overall, I lied about as much as I thought I would. Everyone who knows me will say I'm an open book and say things as they are, so I don't really lie often or to hide anything. On the first day, I predicted I'd lie three times, but only lied twice, and on the second day, I predicted I'd lie twice and lied twice. I think there are instances where if I hadn't been doing this project, I may have been more inclined to lie. For example, my friend asked how I was as we walked past each other and rather than answer "I'm good. How are you?" as I usually would in order to keep moving on with whatever I was doing, I stopped and told her that I was really struggling with this project and that I cried multiple times that day already. Hearing this, she gave me a hug, which turns out I needed, so I am very glad I was completely open and truthful in this situation. However with my strive for perfection and to not seem like a bad person by lying, I do believe I was more inclined to tell the truth and lie less than I would on a completely normal day.

I think another reason I didn't lie too much was because of the things I didn't say. Rather than tell the girl in my sorority group chat that she's being obnoxious or that nobody cares, I simply ignored her actions. By saying nothing, I wasn't being truthful about how I felt about the situation, but also told no lies. When I do lie, it's almost always a white lie or a lie with an element of truth, but often, my non-confrontational behavior discourages saying anything at all.

I tend to overthink things and take something small or nonexistent and create a big problem out of it in my head. For example, if I'm home all day and my roommate doesn't really talk to me, I feel like maybe she is angry at me or something. But really, she's just focused on her own work and things that she's doing. In conversations, I might take someone's body language the wrong way. My friend might just casually look away once in a while, and I'll feel like they are incredibly bored with me and don't want to be talking. Stuff like that.

For my self intervention, I wanted to appreciate myself more and stop overthinking so much. Whenever I would catch myself wanting to be self-critical in the past few days, I would just say in my head. Stop. Then, I would go on and tell myself, hey, I'm proud of you for __. I went to a dinner tonight with some coworkers, and I didn't know what to say for some time, so I was

more quiet. But instead of beating myself up for being too quiet or not social enough, I just told myself good job for going.

It's crazy how much power my thoughts have in my life. They can make me feel great or horrible. I've been having a rough quarter mental health wise, so having this intervention was helpful in being a good friend to myself. I think we, as people, tend to be harsh on ourselves and beat ourselves up easily. How often is it that we'll say, oof that was stupid, or shoot I should have done that instead or said that. But how rare is it that we'll say to ourselves, like we would to our friend or child, good job. I'm proud of you for stepping out of your comfort zone. I'm proud of you for being honest and being yourself. And so on.

I'm going to try to continue thinking more positively and taking strides to care for myself better. After all, I spend the rest of this life with myself-- might as well be kind to this gal.

In Judaism, when someone dies we practice something called "sitting Shiva." It includes the covering of all mirrors in the home during mourning so that you are not "distracted by yourself." I get so frustrated with how my confidence, my sense of worth, my value is tied to how I look each day. It is such a harmful way to view myself and I know that. There is this constant examination of yourself when you are in front of a mirror, a vanity that violently pours out of yourself without being able to control it. There is no reason why how I look should dictate how I interact with the world or with others. For my intervention I chose to sit Shiva with myself, and covered all of the mirrors in my apartment and didn't use my phone camera for 4 days. The mirrors were covered for days that involved a semi formal dance, a job interview, and a date. As a woman, sometimes the pressures of how I must look and act are crippling and suffocating and too much to handle at times. These pressures also make me go through the world selfishly, where catching a glimpse of myself in a mirror completely reorients my thoughts to focus on me. This intervention was liberating. I felt like I was floating through the world just like normal, but at the same time it felt like it was so loudly absent of judgement. I always thought the flaws I hyper focused on in the mirror were what everyone else saw first and foremost. But when I didn't have a mirror to know those flaws, I didn't have a voice in my head telling me to look for any signs that the people in my life were noticing them too. On the first day I remember searching for a variation of tone, a side glance, anything from my roommates to prove that I had greasy hair or pimples or anything that I would normally get stuck on when I looked in a mirror. They treated me like business as usual. This intervention taught me that I am not as important as my head makes me believe. To put it simply, no one cares and no one's life is affected in the ways I thought it would be by myself looking particularly ugly one day. It all sounds so dumb to write down on paper, but it's true. I caught myself more willing to raise my hand in class and talk to the stranger in front of me in line during this intervention. My mother is the type of person that doesn't have more than 3-5 photographs of herself since she was the age of 25, because she didn't like how she looked as she aged. I thought I was different from her, but my freshman year of college I gained some pretty self-deprecating habits. I didn't buy myself a piece of clothing for a year because of how uncomfortable I was with myself and my weight gain. My thought process was that I didn't deserve a new piece of clothing. That is not how I want to go through life. This intervention showed me that I am so so happy when I don't care how I look. I am such a better person who notices so much more of what's going on in the world. I am radically present when I'm not thinking of myself in these ways. I have less fear and less social anxiety.

The four days reminded me of how I felt for the entirety of my time in Uganda, when my voice and my passion and my personality seemed at the forefront and I couldn't even care to notice that I was covered in dirt half the time or my hair was almost to the stage of dreads. I like to believe I can be that person all of the time, but this intervention revealed to me that I have a lot more growing to do and that our society, this college environment, gets things wrong a lot of the time. This intervention was what I needed to ground myself to reality and to take myself away from that exhausting position of believing myself to be the center of the universe. I have an immense amount of privilege to concern myself with how I look this much. Life has a lot more to offer and a lot more pressing needs/worries.

Time management has always been hard for me. With the transition from semesters to quarters I decided to be more responsible with my time because I did not have a choice! I started planning my day out hour by hour trying to squeeze in studying whenever I could. I'm active in clubs and work so by the end of the day a majority of my time is taken up by the three. Around mid quarter I felt like I wasn't doing anything just for the fun of doing it. I was worried about how efficient I was going to be with school, work, and clubs I forgot to schedule time to enjoy myself which is just as important! As my third self intervention I decided for 4 days I was going to sing a song as loud as I possibly could. I chose to sing a song as loud as I could because I don't have to sing for work, school, or any club activity. I wouldn't be taking time out of my day to improve any of those three things by, I would be singing purely for enjoyment.

Day one was Ball and Chain by Janis Joplin, day two was Yo(Excuse Me Miss Chris Brown, day three was Money by Leikeli47, and finally day four was I Won't Say I'm In Love from the Hercules soundtrack. When I say as loud as I can I mean I was red in the face, screaming in my car after class all of those four days. I immediately loved doing this self intervention! Yelling some of your favorite songs is a great way to blow off some steam and put yourself in a better mood. I felt myself unwind after every screeching session and more light hearted. I tried to be mindful of my attention span before and after singing as loud as a possibly can and found that I could concentrate better on schoolwork after I sang compared to before. I don't think I am going to keep doing this self intervention every day, but I definitely will start making time to sing as loud as I possibly can every so often!

For my self intervention I did not eat red meat. Though I try to do this all the time I am constantly cheating myself saying it is just a one time thing even though I know it is not. It was not as hard as I thought it would be and actually made some really good turkey tacos and I ended liking them better than beef. The hardest part was when I went to In-N-Out with my roommates for "Friendsgiving" on our last night before we all went home for Thanksgiving break. I got a grilled cheese, which I will admit is not as good as the cheeseburger. I also eat bacon with breakfast when I make eggs so I had turkey bacon instead and it was still good. I gave up all meat for Lent my senior year of high school and it was really hard for me and I ended up eating poorly because I didn't like most vegetarian substitutes like soy burgers and I ended up just eating a lot of carbs, so I decided to just cut out red meat this time. This was healthier for me and good for the planet because cows produce a lot of methane and take more water than chickens and turkeys do. I am definitely going to try to continue doing this and my mom and brother (not my dad) also did it with me which made it easier and more fun because I was not alone.

Often throughout the week, I find myself attached to my phone screen. Whether it's the dopamine response from seeing notifications or relying on my phone as a crutch when I don't want to do work or interact with the outside world, my phone traps me in a technology bubble. I find myself living one foot in reality and one foot in the media space. As a result, I don't really feel present. To challenge this, I decided for one week that I would download an app that would track my usage and notify me when I've reached certain limits and when interacting with others in real life, I would put my phone away and out of sight. Not just in my pocket, but either my backpack, my room when I was at home, or even in my car when I was at the climbing gym. At first, I was kind of anxious to see how much I really used my phone and the possibility of missing a notification from someone who needed me made me nervous. But quickly these anxieties left. From applying these procedures, I found myself feeling more uplifted and freer. I was present in conversation and was able to withhold more details in conversations with friends. I was able to follow up on these details and it made my friendships feel more intentional and invested. This brought me lots of joy. Also by limiting my phone use through the app, I wasted a lot less time meandering about in social media and games. Moving forward, I did delete the app as it wasted too much battery and the notifications were annoying, but I did really like being present so I would still like to apply putting away my phone to be more present.

This past week I tried to reduce my cell phone usage. More specifically I tried to reduce my time on social media. Although I didn't delete all of my social media apps, I attempted to only use them for necessary communication. It shocked me how much my finger would wander to Instagram or Snapchat before I even realized what was happening. At first it was pretty hard to not search for a media app, and acknowledge that I don't constantly need to be on my phone. As the week went on, the less I was on my phone the more I saw how much our society is glued to technology. Every where you go the people around you are looking down at their devices. We have created a culture of anxiety and discontentment when we don't have something to constantly gratify our minds. I found this intervention to be extremely eye opening because it revealed to me how easy it is to become engulfed in technology.

For my personal intervention, I decided to take cold showers for a week. Many environmental-oriented individuals I keep up with had recently done this, but for thirty. Quite honestly, my intent was to make it thirty days, but I only lasted a week. Digging up the will power to take an ice cold shower while its pouring outside proved to be incredibly hard. I chose to do this for a couple of reasons- to recognize how much I take for granted in terms of basic amenities (check my privilege), and because its supposed to have a sleuth of health benefits I won't go into detail about. I was surprised by how much it affected my psyche. I'm normally a very cold person as is, and not having that time to scald myself in the shower and relax whilst mitigating a full schedule was very aggravating. This would be something worth trying again under different conditions- summer employment, or perhaps just better timing- which perhaps defeats the point of the inconvenience by making it more convenient. Moral is, I'm privileged and I failed, but I also recognize it.

For my final intervention I decided to try something that you tried - only acknowledging people who acknowledged me first. I assumed this was going to make me happier in the sense that only the people who cared about me would give me the time of day. In other words, I thought that if I didn't talk to someone first (or even look at them) that only people not worth knowing would reciprocate. I was wrong in my findings.

Last Sunday, I decided to only acknowledge people who acknowledged me first. This usually came in the form of somebody else saying hello to me first. This was the unusual and unsuccessful aspect of the intervention because the very nature of saying hello to someone usually means they are already friends with you. It wasn't making me happier to receive greetings from my already close friends. Additionally, I wanted this to be working for strangers. Unfortunately in today's world people would prefer to keep their heads down and continue walking to their destination, so I wanted to tweak my intervention.

About 3 days in, I decided to smile at everyone walking by, but not saying anything. So now my intervention model went from acknowledgement to talking specifically. This method got better results, but still not a significant improvement in my life for it to matter. One VERY interesting take away however was the fact that EVERYBODY smiles back, even if it seems like no one is self aware to begin with.

For my final self-intervention I decided to cut out all social media. I've never really been all that into social media to begin with, so I figured it was time to try staying off all of it. Even though I never really got into social media I still was on a few platforms, mostly because I felt that I should be. However, more and more lately I would become frustrated at how much time I spent on it and just how annoying most things are on social media. So this intervention gave me the opportunity I needed to go ahead just delete it all. At first I found myself going on my phone a lot and aimlessly swiping around. But after a few days I began just staying off my phone, other than for necessary communication, for work, and for school related activities. This was especially helpful while heading into finals week as it led to reduced distractions while studying and doing homework. I hope I can continue to keep myself off of social media, as I feel it has undoubtedly been to my advantage.

For my self-intervention of choice, I decided to start a daily meditation practice and hold a couple of my friends accountable for doing the same. Back home, I go to weekly guided meditation sessions with a teacher I know, and I find that I'm much more consistent with meditation throughout the whole week when I do that. I find that when I meditate often, not only does meditation get easier, but I feel calmer, more rational, and less prone to stress all the time.

My meditation teacher introduced the idea to his whole group of finding a "meditation buddy" who you text every day with a reminder to meditate, or a status update on one's own meditation. He challenged us to do this for a month with someone in the class, and it worked so well for me and my buddy that we kept it up for at least 2 or 3 before life happened and we stopped consistently checking in. I remembered how much I liked this practice and thought it would be a great way to keep me accountable with starting a daily practice again, as well as giving me the opportunity to share something that is very helpful to me with others.

I told a couple of my friends about the idea and they were on board, so we started a group chat to remind each other to meditate. I learned a lot from this.

One - having other people keeping me accountable is very effective, and I was able to stay fairly consistent in my daily practice for a few weeks. This did not last forever unfortunately, but I still meditate far more often and have learned more about a strategy that can help me to achieve that consistency.

Two - keeping people on track can be difficult when they are not motivated to take an action themselves. One of my friends who joined in this was interested, but I doubt he would have started this on his own. While I'm glad that this got him to start meditating more often (but still not daily) and he told me that it's been beneficial, I realize now that I can't lean on only having accountability partners who are less committed than I am.

Three - there are other ways to achieve the same benefits, and I can learn more from those around me than I would think. The same friend, I later learned, didn't meditate often because he prefers journaling. I tried this because of our conversation about it, and I loved it. Because I was willing to learn from him, I'm now aiming to do that regularly as well.

"For my final self-intervention, I wanted to find something in my life that is a weak area of mine, and make intentional efforts to improve myself. One area I wanted to work on for this intervention is keeping my commitments. Due to my spontaneous nature and love for people, I tend to make plans last minute and say yes to everyone who asks to spend time with me. This is because I like to believe that I can do it all, and not have to sacrifice anything. I also don't like to tell people no, because I fear disappointing them or eliminating the possibility of attending. As a result, I over-commit myself to spending time with others, and something has to give. Usually, I will forget about a prior commitment and then be unable to go to all of the things that have overlapping times. Therefore, I challenged myself for 3 weeks to stick to the social plans I made first, and say no when I knew I had no feasible way to attend two things at once, also considering what my work and school schedule could and couldn't handle. To keep my commitments, I would schedule every time I said yes into my google calendar. This way, I could refer to it and see what I was already planning when another opportunity came up. I also tried my best to get back to the person who invited me immediately, so no expectations would be established and later fail. This was hard for me to do, because I could not eliminate the fear of missing out on all events. However, I found myself happier, less stressed, and less guilty when I prioritized my time based on who I said yes to, not what I preferred to do. I also feel like this exercise has helped me become a more effective communicator, and I found myself adopting new habits of setting an exact day and time to meet each time I made plans. That way, I was held accountable and didn't appear to be a flake. I feel this has also made me a better friend, because I'm more consistent and reliable with my promises. I will continue to practice this consciousness of what I commit to, and keeping track in my calendar will help me understand when it's just plain impossible to be in two places at once. I've learned that it's okay to not be able to do it all, and I just have to keep reminding myself of that."

Coming into this intervention, I had no idea what I was going to choose. I then realized that I wanted to do a self-intervention that would not only have a positive effect on me, but also on the world around me. After I used the carbon footprint calculator I knew that I wanted my self-intervention to involve reducing my negative impact on the environment. My worst effect on the environment was through air travel but I do not have any flights planned anyway so there was nothing I could do in regards to air travel in one week. I decided to go with cutting out all driving for one week. I began walking to class or taking the bus. It was pretty difficult at first because it is over a 35 minute walk and the buses come every 40 minutes so I had to start my journey to campus a lot earlier each day. I wanted to get food late one night when I would have ordinarily driven to some fast food, I then pulled up my uber eats app and almost ordered a pizza when I realized that I was still increasing the carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere by ordering it online versus driving myself to get it. I went to bed hungry that night but I'd like to think I slept easy without the guilt of breaking my intervention. By the end of the week I became used to not using a car and I think that I can start going a couple days a week without using my car in the future. I hope that I can also find other ways of reducing my negative environmental impact when I go back to driving.