

Photo Contest

Are you an aspiring photographer? Do you love to take pictures? Whether you take them on your cell phone or have an actual camera, we want to see them! Send your best photo to info@claimyouryouth.com. We will select the best one to run in the Fall newsletter. What do you get? First and foremost, you will receive a prize from us here at Claim Your Youth. Plus, who doesn't want bragging rights with all of your friends. The only rule is no people can be in the photo. Now, go out, take pictures and send us your best work.



SUMMER 2019

CLAIM YOUR YOUTH

WINNING AT LIFE

CLAIM YOUR YOUTH™



What's Inside

I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO WEAR!
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Just like the board game of Life, we all take a different path, but every player will face obstacles along the way. So let's hop into our plastic car and make our way to Millionaire Estates.

First off, money isn't everything, but you can't just go live in a tree and rely on the government and expect everything to be hunky dory. Finding a solid career is important—and then you can retire in the woods if that's what you want.

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WINNING AT LIFE

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The idea of a career is scary for a teenager; there's a lot of pressure to decide right now what you want to do for the next few decades. I'm going to let you in on a little secret: you can still have a good salary, buy a house, drive a nice car and travel to distant lands while doing something you enjoy.

So you're in your rickety little car driving over colored spaces, and you come to your first choice: college or career? The average annual salary for workers with just a high school diploma is \$35,256 while college graduates make \$59,124, and that number increases with higher education degrees. Yet, with college, you'll already face your first speed bump: student loans. Don't worry, you're not the only one. Over 44 million Americans have student loan debt.

You're in the financial hole, but you've landed a nice career. Now what? Getting out of that aforementioned debt takes time. To better your chances at becoming debt free and retiring comfortably at a reasonable age, you must strive to earn promotions and make good investments.

Sounds easy, right? Oops, you didn't spin the wheel hard enough and you've been laid off. Losing your job, unexpected medical and property mishaps, and a simmering mid-life crisis are all unfortunate obstacles, but there are good obstacles as well. Getting married, having kids and buying a larger home are all great events, but also cost a great amount of money. To get back on track, you may make a career change, take out a loan, add supplemental income or go back to school. Not only is this a financial hit, but your time has been stolen as well.

Okay, so you didn't derail and you're still on the road toward Millionaire Estates, but you don't even have gas money. This is where things like retirement accounts and stocks come into play, so when you're interviewing for a job, make sure you understand what options are offered, and research what all the different options and accounts entail.

Life is a hard, complex game, and it's going to get more difficult as the cost of living inflates. \$1 million may just last you over a decade which is unsettling—and that's at this point in time. If winning was easy, everyone's life would be fantastic and pointless. There's a reward waiting, you just have to earn it by keeping your options open, making wise decisions and taking advantage of opportunities.

I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO WEAR!

You don't have any money and you don't have anything to wear. As a man, I feel lucky because our wardrobe isn't nearly as extensive as a woman's. For example, if I wear a t-shirt over and over, I will hear, "Man, I love that shirt." If a woman wears the same thing again, she will hear whispers behind her back asking, "Oh my God, didn't she like just wear that last month?" It's brutal. Luckily, there are ways around this.

First, a great pair of versatile jeans or joggers goes a long way. Most people don't notice your pants, plus it's strange if someone is just staring at your legs anyway. For more business casual or formal events, men can have one suit that matches a few shirts, and women can sport a nice suit skirt with the same effect. Also, a casual hoodie, cardigan or flannel can be a neutral piece of clothing that matches everything else. Lastly, finding a functional, stylish shoe or sandal can mesh well with either going to class or going out.

Target stores like, well, Target. Or you can hit the discount spots like Ross, TJ Max and Kohl's, and even name brand factory outlets like J. Crew, Express and Nordstrom Rack. There are great websites like Uniqlo, Amazon, Ebay and Etsy, and don't forget about thrift stores. You can always say something is retro, and right now, the '90s are coming back. How awesome would it be if you could look just like I did when I was a teenager? Please don't answer that.

You don't have to spend a lot to look good, and take advantage of the styles, or make your own. Remember, most college students share the same empty closet as you.



you're
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You're independent, ready to live your life without the stranglehold of a parental watch, and now you're approved.

The idea of freedom at college can be exhilarating, but what you'll quickly realize is that you're poor, and credit card companies are very aware of your vulnerability. Most will have a college credit card option which has lower credit limits, cash back offers and high approval rates. This can be dangerous.

You're going to want to go out, need clothes, and occasionally shop for "get-togethers". It's very important to control your spending because the two main cons to having a credit card are high interest rates, the average sitting at a hefty 17.61 percent, and the fact that it could negatively affect your credit history.

On the other hand, having a student credit card could help build your credit because you don't have any yet. They're also good for emergencies, tracking your spending and staying organized.

I know that you're already reading a lot because of your classes, but read the terms of the credit card you're applying for—the biggest lie in the world is someone saying they've read and agreed to the terms and conditions—and be mindful of the interest rates. Also, only get one card! If you need two, you're spending too much. A good way to track your spending is by making a basic spreadsheet.

When I was younger, I opened a credit card, but only spent within my means. Why didn't I just use cash then? This way I was able to build my credit and never stress about getting in debt. You just need to have self-control, and remember, no one else is being fancy in college. You have plenty of time to do that later when you have a career.