

Why do you think fr.  
lawton says the  
journey to be oneself  
seems the riskiest  
of ...



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Risks of the College Career Many unknowns lie ahead for any young person leaving home for the first time. It is a daunting, somewhat frightening circumstance that is compounded by the enormous pressure of doing well both academically and socially at a higher intellectual level. Adjusting to a more in-depth and expansive curriculum will require honing the study habits but the fear of failing, not the classes, but the parents, will be incentive enough to make school-work the first priority. The social aspect of the college experience is the least of the anxieties because it is not a totally new phenomenon. Choosing friends with a degree of discrimination, such as those who share the same priorities as I is essentially accomplished by the same methodology as in high school. Nervous anticipation is probably the best description for the feeling, meeting new people from far-off places, hoping my background either matches or complements theirs. Leaving the protective and structured home-life is the greatest adjustment, at least for me; therefore, the most frightening because the pitfalls related to the unknown are the largest and easiest to fall into.

Everyone knows at least an overview of a similar story which was related to me by my parents on many occasions. Many want to get as far away from their parents and home town as possible and others want the security home provides while being allowed to make their own choices, in other words, to have their cake and eat it to. Finally the day comes when they leave the nest to embark on the great adventure that is life. Nearly to a person, once they have flown, they lament about the carefree days of childhood when there were no bills to pay, were not forced to discipline themselves and if a problem arose, they could just call mom or dad and they would magically fix

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it. Instead of having to grudgingly get up every morning to an annoying alarm bell and eat cold pizza for breakfast, as children, mother came in, opened up the drapes then returned as often as need to gently awaken you as the smell of a hot, nutritious breakfast tempted you to life. Freedom is a two-edged sword, a fact of life that is generally shockingly discovered only after leaving home.

Living away from home is great but it has its downsides as well. That first month away from home is truly a liberating feeling. You can do whatever you want on a whim and have to answer to no one. You can eat ice cream for breakfast at the crack of noon when you wake, come home when the party is over for a change and watch whatever disgusting show on television you and your admittedly disgusting friend want to. You also can espouse whatever opinion you desire regardless of how un-thought-out it happens to be without reproach, at least from anyone who could take away your privileges or cross-examine you unmercifully. However, the flip-side raises its ugly head soon enough. If you get into trouble, you, not mom and dad must figure out the remedies and to your surprise, there is no magical solution. For some, it's something simple such as changing a tire on a rain-soaked freeway and for others; it's more complicated such as wrecking the car and having to figure out the bus schedule. Still, for others, it may be experiencing an unwanted pregnancy alone. The safety net you took for granted is gone and nothing can prepare one for the shock of that. When you leave home, you finally understand the expression, ' it's a tough life.'

Some take responsibility for their actions and find leaving the nest more liberating than daunting. Others ' go a little crazy' after leaving home and do

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not seemingly understand that freedom does mean the freedom to anything one wants whenever they want without repercussion. The key to reducing the risks of college life is two-fold, keeping focus on the end-result and imagining what your parents might say about any given situation. That is what I intend to do to reduce the risks inherent in a college career.