

Do not call your parents
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By Rick Snee

Ah, Highlanders Festival: the time of year when men wear skirts, creepy alumni relive their “glory days,” everyone is drunk or hung over, parking is a (worse) nightmare, and you're broke. Yep, you've made it to midterms, but your bank account is wiped out. Guess it's time to call mom and dad.

Before you pick up the phone, though, take a moment to consider. If you have not talked to your parents since August, you are about to sound shallow. Parents are “very disappointed” in shallow offspring.

The first consideration you should make is whether you actually *need* to call your parents. Be sure to collect all debts from other students before you call home. If your friends can't pay, then they aren't really friends. You can break people's legs if they aren't your friends anymore.

After breaking everyone's legs, then think of other people to call instead of your parents. There are grandparents, aunts, uncles or even fake relatives who touch you. Just a tip: casually mentioning the police makes the fake relatives pay more.

All right, so “Uncle Ernie” wouldn't budge without photographic evidence. Look at all that stuff you brought with you but never use ... everyday. You don't really need a video game system, DVD player, television, calculator or computer at college. And after you pawn off all of those, you won't need games, movies, clothes or a desk. Might as well get rid of the bed, too – no one's going to stay over now.

So the pawn shop gave you \$50 for everything – which you spent on beer – and your ex is dating the person who bought all your stuff. That's one less mouth! How much money did you spend on his or her meals, bail, bondage gear, movie tickets and rehab? And if you're a guy, how much did you pay to get into fraternity parties and Riley's with her? Make it a clean break, starting with their legs.

Now every dollar you earn is your dollar, but it ain't growing on trees. Even if it did, the school keeps cutting trees down. You might need a job. Don't bother looking for a decent, rewarding job. Your choices are off-campus grunt work and on-campus menial labor.

Off-campus jobs eat up time and energy. Your schedule will stretch out more than your class schedule, and probably intersect most days, too. Who needs sleep, right? Any job not involving food doesn't exist, and the restaurant manager has been in charge since opening day. You aren't moving up until somebody dies. There's tips ... but everyone else is just as broke as you.

On-campus is even worse. You sit. That's about it. And since you hocked your computer, there ain't squat to do except, well, squat.

All right, so you've made it all the way down here, but you're still busted. It's time to call your parents ... but what do you say to them? Easy: just read this article to them. They're in Wisconsin; they'll never know a thing.

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