

*Chris Reigeluth on Individuality and Making the Most of One's Experiences (shortened)*

In Walden, Henry David Thoreau discussed going to the woods to live the way of life that was right for him. He was following the path that lay closest to his heart. Thoreau lived for himself and in doing so made the most of every opportunity that came his way. One of my greatest fears in life is that I will reach the end of my time on earth and realize that I did not live a life fully true to myself. In an age when men and women are commonly judged on such insignificant things as their status in society or their material possessions, I fear that too often people stray from their own road in life in order to achieve a status that is more accepted by the majority. Throughout high school, I failed to seize many of the opportunities I had. AP classes and extra-curriculars were sometimes pursued in place of much more interesting and worthwhile alternatives, because they were what colleges wanted to see. At Pasquaney, we are blessed with a very unique opportunity. We live in an environment that rewards risk-taking and fosters individuality. We learn from each other because we all have different things to offer. None of us is the same, and no one person here will ever find contentment trying to mimic the lifestyle of another person. It's not worth it and you will find yourselves, as I found myself, regretting that you missed out on some incredible opportunities along the way. I challenge you to find your own woods and to live deliberately. Experience as much life while you can and hopefully down the road you will move on knowing that your passions have been fulfilled and your destinies reached. Stay true to your dreams and seize them while you can.