



Turki Alturki, communication sophomore, listens to NPR radio on his daily hour-long commute to and from school. (Turki Alturki/Staff photographer)

Opinion

Making your daily commute worthwhile

By Turki Alturki
Staff reporter

My coffee is ready. The smell of it is very amazing. I fill my cup and walk out the door. My car is ready and the gas tank is full. My phone battery is fully charged and my headphones are with me, too. Now, I'm ready to hit the road.

I drive an hour everyday going to college and also an hour back home. That is 10 hours from my life every week on the road. That means 40 hours a month I spend driving. Just imagine what anyone can do with this much time on the road. During this time you can listen to audio books or think about projects and homework you have to do, listen to any podcast you're interested in, or you can just listen to music.

I have been commuting this far since the beginning of this semester. This is not something new for me, I was commuting the same amount of time in my home city, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The traffic was terrible every day and sometimes it took me about an hour and a half to get to my work or back home.

In Saudi Arabia, I would watch

YouTube in my car because we would be completely stopped in traffic. I would see some people reading during that time and you would see a lot of people just doing nothing. For me, that time was before I came to United States, so I would watch English videos to be ready for my classes. I liked doing that at that time so driving wasn't waste of time and that made the drive worth my time. To be honest, when I go to my work without this traffic, I felt that I had wasted my time.

These days, I don't have to deal with the traffic anymore. Of course, I can't watch YouTube or read while I'm driving. Instead, I listen to many things. In the morning when I'm on my way to school I listen to the NPR radio station most of the time. In the evenings, every day is different for me. Sometimes I listen to Arabic podcasts, English podcasts, or I listen to the Holy Quran. When I have a paper to write I don't listen to anything, I think about my paper and write my ideas about it. That helps me save time for planning my paper and how I want to do it.

Many of Southwestern College's faculty, staff, and students

are also commuting to the college from other places. One of the faculty members who is commuting is Chris Barker, assistant professor of political science. "I always listen to podcasts," Barker Said. He also said that everyone can listen and learn new things while they commute to work or school and make good use of their time.

One of the things that only commuters can see is the changing of nature on the road. For me as a photographer, that is something great. I can see the difference between the landscapes that I see on my drive every day. That helps me to take great landscape pictures. Also seeing the same things every day helps you to think new ideas about it. There is a farm I see on the road, I have been thinking how to photograph it and I have come up with many ideas on how I want to do it.

The thing that I hate most is calling a company and asking for help to solve a problem. That call is always long and very boring. I find that a good time to do that is when I'm on the road. Now I plan all my phone calls during this time. Of course using your phone while driving is dangerous

but using your headphones will solve this issue.

When you commute you will probably eat in your car. For me, I eat my breakfast every morning in my car on the road. It is always a cheese sandwich for me, but you can have different choices to eat in your car. You need something fast and clean that will not make a mess in your car.

My coffee and my water are my favorite things to drink on the road. I don't recommend that you eat big meals in your car. You don't want your car or your clothes to smell bad.

This is my commuting style and what I do. Commuting is one of the things that gives me the chance to improve. It is always about yourself and what you want to do. All of us want to be better and be better people to our families, our community and to ourselves.

This is a chance for everyone who wants to improve to in life. So don't waste any of your time at all.

Turki Alturki is a sophomore majoring in communication. You may email him at Turki.alturki@sockans.edu.

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