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The World Speaks

International English Speeches from
Influential Leaders

Words of Leaders





Justin Trudeau

Diversity doesn't have to a weakness

Bonjour tout le monde! Merci et felicitations! (unknown language) I am very happy to be here with you today, deeply honored. Thank you for that kind introduction, Noibe. Andy, it is wonderful to see you again. I am so grateful for the honor you and NYU (New York University) have given to me today.

Now, you know – you may not know, but Andrew is an honorary Canadian and British Columbian because, like me, he studied the university of British Columbia back in the day. It makes me proud that Canada was part of Andrew's formation, just as NYU has helped form so many amazing Canadians, including two members of my own staff. I am actually told that 180 of the NYU class of 2018 are Canadians. Hello, welcome my friends!

I have to say to be here now, speaking with all of you – in Yankee Stadium, one of the greatest places in one of the greatest cities on earth is more than a little humbling.

My friends, you are now NYU graduates, the best and the brightest. You have great potential and possibilities and therefore, you have enormous responsibility, too. So today, I would like to talk about the nature of both those things and I would like to offer you a challenge. One that I think is essential for your future success as individuals, and as the leaders that you are becoming. Among the many things I admire about NYU, is that about a fifth of the students are international. And a similar proportion are the very first in their families to go to college. This group is truly diverse in every possible way. And I think that is an extraordinarily valuable and important thing. When I graduated in the early 1990s, I went on a trip around the world with a few good friends, who actually remain good friends to this day, which is a sort of a miracle. We trekked and travelled, mostly over land, from Europe to Africa to Asia and that remains one of the great formative experiences of my life. It was an amazing adventure. It was also a really important contributor to my continued, broader education. Because forced me, really for the first time as an adult, to meet, engage, befriend people whose views and experiences, ideas, values and language were very different from my own.

See, when a kid from Montreal meets a Korean fisherman living in Mauritania, befriends a Russian veteran of their Afghan war, or a shopkeeper and his family living in Danang, interesting conversations always happen. Now, maybe some of you have talked about doing something like a great trip like that after graduation. But I would be willing to bet one of the first things you heard was a warning: "You cannot do that in this day and age. It is not safe!" but here is my question: is it really just the issue of physical safety that makes our loved ones so anxious at the idea of us getting out there, or is it the threat

that if we look past our frames – the frames of our own lives, of our own community’s structured values and belief systems to truly engage with people who believe fundamentally different things, we could perhaps be transformed into someone new and unfamiliar to those who know and love us?

See, there is no question that today’s world is more complex than it was in the mid-1990s. There are serious and important problems that we are grappling with and will continue to grapple with. But we are not going to arrive at mutual respect, which is where we solve common problems, if we cocoon ourselves in an ideological, social or intellectual bubble. Now, we can see it all around us - there is a peculiar fascination with dystopia in our culture today. You see it everywhere on film and TV, but the truth is that, on balance, we have the good fortune to live in a time of tremendous possibility and potential; a time when it is within our grasp to eliminate extreme poverty, to end terrible diseases like malaria and TB, and to offer a real chance at an education to everyone on this planet. But for us to move forward, to keep moving forward and moving forward, we have to do it together – all together. Humanity has to fight our tribal mindset. We go to the same church? Cool, you are in my tribe. You speak my language? You are in my tribe. You are an NYU alumni? You are in my tribe. You play Pokemon Go? You are a vegetarian? You like the Yankees? You go to the gun range? You are pro-choice? Tribe, tribe, tribe.

See, but of course, it is not the “belonging” part that is the real problem, it is the corollary: you are part of my tribe, and they are not. Whether it is race, gender, language, sexual orientation, religious or ethnic origin, or our beliefs and values themselves – diversity doesn’t have to be a weakness. It can be our greatest strength!

Now often, people talk about striving for tolerance. Now, don’t get me wrong: there are places in this world where a little more tolerance would go a long way, but if we are being honest right here, right now, I think we can aim a little higher than mere tolerance. Think about it: saying “I tolerate you” actually means something like, “Ok, I grudgingly admit that you have a right to exist, just don’t get in my face about it, and oh, don’t date my sister.” There is not a religion in the world that asks you to “tolerate the neighbor.” So let’s try for something a little more like acceptance, respect, friendship, and yes, even love. And why does this matter? Because, in our aspiration to relevance; in our love for our families; in our desire to contribute, to make this world a better place, despite our differences, we are all the same. And when you meet and befriend someone from another country or another culture who speaks a different language or who worships differently, you quickly realize this. And here is my main point, and the challenge I am offering you today. Our celebration of difference needs to extend to differences of values and beliefs, too. Diversity includes political and cultural diversity. It includes a diversity of perspectives and approaches to solving problems. See, it is far too easy, with social media shaping our interactions, engage only with people with whom we already agree – members of our tribe. Well, this world is and must be bigger than that.

So here is my request: as you go forward from this place, I would like you to make a point of reaching out to people whose beliefs and values differ from your own. I would like you to listen to them, truly listen and try to understand them, and find that common ground. You have a world of opportunity at your fingertips. But as you go forward from here, understand that just around the corner, a whole different order of learning awaits, in which your teachers will come from every station in life, every education level, every belief system, every lifestyle. And I hope you will embrace that. You have been students, you will continue to learn all your lives, but now it is also time for you to become leaders. In every generation, leaders emerge because they one day awake to the realization that it is not up to someone else to fix this problem, or take up that cause. It is up to them. So now is the time for you to lead. Leaders. Now, I am sure that is a word that has been tossed around you and at you quite a bit over the past few hours, days, weeks and years. Leaders of tomorrow. Leaders of today. But what does it mean? What attributes does a

21st century leader need to have? What do people need most from their leaders today and tomorrow? Now I think you need to be brave, really brave. and I know when you think of courageous leaders, you think of those folks who stood implacably and fearlessly, anchored in their sense of rightness, willing to pit their ideals against all corners, against the slings and arrows aimed their way. Well, I don't think that is brave enough. I don't think that is good enough for what our shared future will ask of you. I actually don't think it is ever been good enough.

See, let me tell you a bit about Wilfrid Laurier, a promising younger lawyer at the end of the 19th century, who would go on to become my second-favorite Prime Minister. He was raised and educated as a proud, catholic French-Canadian, an exemplary representative of one side of the two identities that had come together to found Canada just a few decades before. The two solitudes – the other half being English speaking, protestant and fiercely loyal to the British Crown – accommodated each other, cooperated together, and generally put up with each other to build our country, but still felt all too well the divisions and fault lines that had led them through almost a millennium of tensions and wars between English and French. It was impressed upon young Wilfrid by his teachers and elders that he must stand up unflinchingly for the values and the identity of his heritage, those beliefs and approaches that were his birthright, and would be his legacy. That they told him, was leadership. But Wilfrid grew to believe otherwise. He realized that it is actually easy to stand rooted in the conviction that you are right, and either wait for others to come to you, or wait for your chance to impose your rightness on others. He saw that it is actually harder to seek compromise, to dig deep into yourself, your ideas and convictions, honestly and rigorously, to see where you can give and where you do need to stand, while opening yourself up to the other point of view, to seek out and find that common ground. And that remains Wilfred's political legacy, more than 100 years later.

To let yourself be vulnerable to another point of view – that is what takes true courage. To open yourself to another's convictions, and risk being convinced, a little, or a lot, of the validity of their perspective. Now that is scary: discovering that someone you vehemently disagree with might have a point; might even be right. But it shouldn't be scary, or threatening particularly to all of you, who have worked so hard these past years to pursue truth, to learn, to grow. Being open to others is what has gradually led Canadians to the understanding that differences can and must be a source of strength, not of weakness. And I say "gradually," because 20th century Canadian history is filled with counter-examples and terrible setbacks that we are still trying to remedy today, most notably the systemic marginalization and oppression of indigenous peoples. We are not perfect, of course, but that sense of openness, respect for other points of view, and acceptance of each other really does underpin our approach as we try to solve the great problems of our time. And not because we are nice – but of course we are – but because by bringing together diverse perspectives, you get a much better shot at meeting those challenges. And that is how we come back to you and the leaders the world needs you to be. Leadership has always been about getting people to act in common cause. We are going to build a new country! We are going to war! We are going to the moon! It usually required convincing, or coercing, a specific group to follow you. And the easiest way to do that has always been through tribal contrasts: "they believe in a different god! They speak a different language! They don't want the same things we do." But the leadership we need most today and in the years to come is leadership that brings people together. That brings diversity to a common cause. This is the antithesis of the polarization, the aggressive nationalism, the identity that have grown so common of late. It is harder, of course. It has always been easier to divide than unite. But mostly, it requires true courage. Because if you want to bring people around your way of thinking, you need to first show them that you are open to theirs. That you are willing to enter into a conversation that might change your mind. Show respect for their point of view, and you have a better chance of actually having them listen to yours. And regardless of what happens, you will have had a genuine exchange that

focused on understanding not on winning a debate or scoring points. And you will both be improved for it. Now let me be very clear, this is not an endorsement of moral relativism or a declaration that all points of view are valid. Female genital mutilation is wrong; no matter how many generations have practiced it. Anthropogenic climate change is real, no matter how much some folks want to deny it. But here is the question: do you want to win an argument and feel good about how superior you are or do you actually want to change behaviors and beliefs? See, it has been pointed out that one of the many differences between Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis was that Davis preferred to win a debate, while Lincoln would rather win the war. And that is the question: do you want to win an argument or do you want to change the world? “With malice toward none, and charity toward all.” Let those words of this country’s greatest president guide your ambitions, your hopes for yourselves, your families, your country, your planet. There is no shortage of cynicism and selfishness in the world. Be their answer, their antidote. I am abundantly optimistic about the future because of you. It is yours to make and mold and shape. The world eagerly awaits, indeed requires, your ideas, your initiatives, your enterprise, your energy, your passion and your compassion, your idealism and your ambition. But remember that true courage is the essential ingredient in all your efforts.

Congratulations, class of 2018! Now go change the world!



Shah Rukh Khan

Freedom to Be Yourself

Thank you, and thank you everyone for inviting me here. This is a huge privilege, not because I am the chief guest. I think it is a privilege mainly because I am one of the parents who have had the opportunity and I will take this opportunity on behalf of all of you to put my hands together and thank Dhirubhai Ambani International School for doing what they are doing to our children so, I want to thank all of the teachers, all the heads of departments, Zareen and Fareeda, I mean, you are the people I used to come to, when I have trouble I come and look at your faces and go away, and I am calm; everything will be sorted out. Kava sir was fantastic at cricket matches and shouts louder than anyone else in the world can, all the staff members, the management, the gentleman who man, the security outside; so wonderful and so even the guy who does the parking back there, everyone for the last 13 to 14 years that I have been here. And especially my friend, Mrs. Nita Ambani.

Okay, so good evening boys and girls, exams are over, if I may say so, darn school is over, which seemed an impossibility just a few years back. That horrible math or physics, or whoever your least favorite teacher is, you will never have to see again. That PE coach who was all about to get you is done and dusted now. I know everybody is looking there! You want to party now, relax, hang out with the beautiful friends you have made in the last 13 years, 14 or some, less. The last thing you really want to do is sit here and listen to someone give you advice on life lessons. And what the future holds for you. And to top it, my qualification to be doing this is zilch, nada, not at all, nothing. Really, apart from the fact that Nita and I are friends and thus, I have some benefits, my reason to be here is the same as that of your elder brother or your sister being allowed to do things that you are not allowed to do at home. I am like them, older! That is all. So if you think that I have had a successful career, as I was getting very embarrassed when David was recounting because also it has been so many years since I have got an award. Got to work harder! So, also if you think that I have had a successful career, a great past performance and my experiences of it; are no assurance that it will work in the future for you, or work for you at all. And anyway, none of what I say today, you will remember as soon as you are out of here or maybe even earlier, because you are still sleeping from the big party you guys had last night.

What I say may make sense to your mom or dad, who will remember it some years down the line, and they will also remember it for the inappropriate things that I am going to say tonight. But you are here, and so am I, so I promise to keep this extremely crisp and sharp, about twenty minutes tops. But be rest assured, I understand if some of you walk out in the middle of my speech for bladder control reasons. Feel free to do that. Feel free, because that is what essentially my talk is about; feeling free. The freedom to be yourself, to listen to your inner voice, and never let anyone tell you who you are, or who you ought to be, including me. These are the only years of your life in which you will be allowed to make regret-free mistakes. As you do so, you will chance upon your dreams. And hopefully make a happy life out of their fulfillment. When you get to be 50, as some of your parents are, none of the mothers, they all look 35. They are all looking extremely hot. Some of your parents are, and like I am. You will know that the bulk of your regrets are from not having done what you wished to do. So don't hold it against your over

diligent father who is telling you to study extra, even post the exams, your annoying mother, who is still depressed that your handwriting is bad. You know she doesn't understand if it was bad five years ago, chances are that your handwriting is not going to improve for the rest of your life, ever!

Mam, get that clear, it is not going to happen. But let me assure you, squiggles and ants and mosquitoes on paper won't kill your career. Any doctor here will tell you, indecipherable hieroglyphics may actually be a career booster. Don't be angry that your parents tell you that friend of yours is not good company, he is spoiling you, and please don't hold it against them when they tell you he is a movie star son and will become a hero what about you? Let me assure you, movie stars' sons and daughters also have to work. Basically, just don't grudge the old man and the old bag, ever. All we parents try to do is to make you happy with your choices, by annoying you with ours, that are actually your choices anyway, but you just don't know it yet. Your hormone levels are too high for you to understand this confusing logic. All you want to be is yourselves and you are quite sure you know what that is. And I am here tonight on your side only to confirm your convictions, as you set forth into the big bad world, from the loving shelter of Mrs. Nita Ambani and all these wonderful and beautiful and warm teachers and faculty who have nurtured you to embark on your own journey through life. I was talking about parents, because I think tonight is about parents. So, I am going to tell you something about my parents. My mother was top class, she was really cool, she loved me unconditionally, was beautiful like all mothers and believed that I will be the most famous main in the world, and I could do no wrong.

In Delhi they say, "Humara bacha na, is the apple of my eye." So was the apple of my mother's eye. My father was a gentle man, he was very educated, masters in Law; extremely intelligent, knew several languages, had travelled the world, knew his politics, fought for the freedom of our country, India, and excelled at sports like hockey, swimming and polo. He could cook and recite poems and knew the capital of every country of the world. My father was also very poor, he was unemployed and struggling to make ends meet for 15 years of my life, that I had the privilege of knowing him. From when I was 10 to when I was 15, not being able to afford fancy gifts, for me, he would wrap up something old that belonged to him, in newspapers and declare it as a birthday gift when my birthday came along. This... in the next eleven and a half minutes left, that I have, is the story of the five gifts my father gave me and how they helped me become what I am today. When I was ten my father gave me an old chess set. Chess is a reflection of life, they say, and as child as it sounds, it is probably true. The first thing it teaches you is that every move has a consequence, whether you perceive that it does or does not, nothing you do, not a single moment is empty of living. So think of things through, not always, but often enough. Often enough, so your life does not feel as black and white and as uniform as the squares on a chessboard. Sometimes in order to move forward, you might need to take a few steps back and there is no loss in doing something that hurts in the short run but proves worthwhile and time. Sometime, they queen might seem sexier, they always do, but if she gets taken by an advisory straight after you save her, then you might be better off saving your castle or the bald bishop, instead. So don't always choose that which seems more desirable, if something tells you that it is going to get you into a whole lot of trouble. What I mean is also about tonight, drive home while your wits are about, instead of staying and getting stoned senseless after the party here. You cannot get anywhere in chess, if you don't look out for the little ones around you, the small pawns. Like is like that too, if you forget the smallest of your people or become foolish enough to imagine that the little grades you are given are of no value, you end up nowhere. When you look around, you learn to notice all the tiny little things that make your existence privileged and special. Just the fact that you are here, in this very moment, at this fantastic school in the company of such adoring parents, is the product of immense love, hard work and sacrifice on the part of many people present here.

Taking your blessings for granted is the most ungracious stupidity, both in chess and in life. Then there is what they call, I don't know how to pronounce it, but sounds very cool, the zugzwang, the zugzwang is really cool word, it sounds like a Chinese aphrodisiac, zugzwang, but it actually is German for, ok I will tone this down, "Oh! Fish I got to get out of here." Anyway, for those of you who have never played the game, it is when you get stuck, that whichever move you make is a bad move, it will happen to each and every one of you, at some point in life. For sure, a moment will come when it will look like there isn't anything going right and nothing you can do to prevent disaster. Ask me, I just finished Dilware and followed it up with fan! So, when you are in zugzwang, kids, don't panic. Whenever there is trouble and you know there is no way out, or disaster, don't panic. With a little embarrassment you will survive it. Trust me all you have to do is make a move.

All you have to do is move on a bit. As the Cheshire cat in Alice in Wonderland said, when Alice came to the fork in the road, "if you don't know where you are going it doesn't matter which road you take." I will do it, as long as you take one road and don't keep standing in the middle of the fork until a truck runs you over. Often in zugzwang, your enemy wins that particular move, but mostly you end up winning the game. There were no computers when I was a kid, and nor were there iPhones for us to google pornography on, while our parents were busy checking the selfie, likes on Instagram. One of the most precious gifts my father gave me was an Italian typewriter. I learned how to use it from him, how to roll paper into the roller and press the lever. I don't know if you guys have seen a typewriter. It is... google it yar. I'd hear the clicking sound of the letters as I pressed them with my fingers, forming words on blank pages fascinated me. To use a typewriter well, you needed diligence; one wrong letter and the whole exercise had to be started all over again. We used something called typeX to erase our mistakes in those days, not to sniff out during math classes. But too much typeX in math classes or in typewriting is unacceptable. So we had to learn how to move your fingers accurately to make words out of thoughts with efficiency and do it over and over again till we got it just right.

As an adult I have come to understand that there is nothing of more value, than your capacity for diligence and your ability to work hard. If you can outwork adversaries and your employees, you can ensure your own success. And whatever it is you choose to do, whatever you are doing, do it once then do it one more time, even more carefully. Practice will make everything seem easier. Be diligent, be thorough. Think of every job you do as the first one, so you have to get it right or you won't be able to impress everyone. And at the same time do it as your last job as if you will not get a chance to do it again ever. Don't just workout, outwork yourself. Only parents clapping! In fact, you can outwork yourself, if you cannot work yourself, then pretty much nothing can prevent you from learning.

My father gave me a camera, and the most beautiful thing about it was that it did not work. We all have those, like our old ones, which don't work. Look really cool. I learned that things don't always have to be functional, to fulfill a need, that sometimes when things are broken, the greatest creativity emanates from the fragments. I found myself looking at my world magically through the unusable lens. And the fact that there was never any actual photograph to see, taught me my most important lesson yet; that creativity is the process of the soul. It does not need an outcome. Or a product for the world to accept. It needs only the truth of its own expression. It comes from within. And makes of your world, whatever you wish it to make. So don't be afraid of your own creativity. Honor it. It doesn't always have to be seen or approved by those around you. It is an expression of your deepest selves.

And it belongs as much to you as it does to the universe. That nurtures and inspires it. All creativity is not for everyone to like or understand. All art is not up for sale. Some creativity has a bigger role to play. It is to keep you company when you are alone, when you need a friend, when the world doesn't seem to understand you. Your creativity, whatever that may be, you know, I know a friend of mine who makes a

dolls out of barf bags from airplanes. Whatever your creativity is, your creative will be the only thing that will keep you inspired and satisfied. Honor it to the end, whatever it may be. Mine is poetry. I write rubbish poetry. It is so bad that sometimes I cringe to read it myself. It is scrap, but I write it, it is my secret place, it is mine to make me feel free and happy. So you find yours and if the world loves it good, if it doesn't, even better, because now you will truly have a friend so keep your creativity intact.

My father was a funny guy. He had the capacity to turn any kind of serious situation in a way that it seemed less stress filled, with a bit of humor. Without a sense of humor, the world will always be a dull and greedy place. No darkness of despair should ever be beyond a good and a hearty laugh. I am going to tell you a few incidents, if you are not bored! I have got about seven and a half minutes left. We used to live on the third floor of an apartment building, and as people on third floor tend to do, my friends and I used to throw things down from the balcony; you know, wrappers, tit bits, dog shit wrapped in a newspaper, the usual stuff. One day the old gentleman on the ground floor, there is always an old senile gentleman on the ground floor. He had had enough of our daily droppings. He charged at us yelling at the top of his voice "Bhaisahab, bhasaihb, upar se cheezen neeche aati hai" and you know the whole colony emerged to witness the spectacle. My father was there. I was mortified and he kept screaming, "Upar se cheezen neeche aati hai".

And it instantly diffused in the situation. He went to the apartment worked out. How dog shit needs to be disposed of properly, over a cup of tea in life was back to normal again. And there was another incident I am going to relate. I had been eyeing this attractive, dusky girl who lived in our building. As smooth as I have been with ladies, for some reason, it occurred to me that if I blew up her letter box with a Diwali cracker called, atom bomb, she'd be very impressed with me. I have always been good with girls like that, ya. I know things about girls. In this insanely romantic belief of mine, her letterbox soon exploded before her eyes. And I still don't know why the desired effect of her running into my arms in slow-motion was replaced with a screaming drama in which she flew up the stairs screaming, ama inga va" I took my chance and as all macho men should, I fled the scene. Few hours later the doorbell rang. I looked through the magic eye and the mother of the love of my life was standing outside looking incensed. I found a place to hide. My father opened the door. The lady began to rattle off a complaint,; your son this, your son that, sorry my Tamil is not good! But it sounded like that and he listened patiently and then responded, "you know ma'am, as you were speaking, I was getting angry with my son. But then suddenly realized how beautiful you are. And I can imagine if your daughter looks anything like you, how can my son be blamed for falling in love with her and behaving so stupidly?" the lady went silent as my father continued telling her how beautiful she was and then she became a little quiet. Another cup of tea was had and she said to me sweetly, "Beta, just because my daughter is so beautiful you shouldn't behave badly with her. You should come home, sit with us, and be friends." So not only did my dad get me off the hook, for blowing up the girl letter box, he actually got me in-roads to a long satisfying relationship with the love of her life that lasted six days. Because then I realize that dating beautiful girls has its downside. Every boy in the colony mad advances at her. So I was regularly beaten up in my attempts to offer her some boy friendly protection. But that is another story.

The point being, learn to laugh at yourselves, every chance you get. If you can manage not to take yourself too seriously, no matter how big a shot you become or how lowly, useless, trivial you feel, you will instantly disarm life's power to beat you down. It makes you braver to face ugliness, because it changes your perspective. Humor is actually the deftness to see the world, the reality, for the transient farce it really is. It is like a talisman for survival. Cultivate it and allow it to lighten every heavy moment. Wear it like a vulgar tattoo, if you don't already have one. Don't ever let it get washed away in the turbulently beautiful seas of life. It is your ticket to staying young and childlike forever. And you will

realize why it matters to stay in childlike when you are my age. And you will watch this speech on YouTube with your children. I will probably have kicked the bucket by then, having smoked enough cigarettes to light up a forest. But I certainly hope that you will have understood what I understand now. No, not that smoking kills, but that part is ok. Well, what I am referring to is, what counts as the most beautiful and final gift that my father gave me. I only realized it was a gift on the day he died, when I was 15 years old. A gift your parents have given you already. Yes, the singularly most exquisite gift, you and I have been given is the gift of life itself.

There is nothing that marks a man or woman out from the ordinary, more perfectly than grace. Grace is the consciousness, that life is bigger than we are and therefore our gratitude for it must match its vastness. It is the understanding, that everyone we encounter, whether they are loving towards us, or offensively abrasive, is human like we are. It is knowing that experiences shape human beings and no matter how good we are at something, or successful we may become, we are never better than the other person. If you can live your life with grace towards those around you, you will accomplish more than you could if you became the president of America. That came out wrong, knowing that Donald Trump is so close to becoming the president of America. I didn't mean that, I will rephrase that guys. If you can live your life with grace towards those around you, "OK actually what the hell", because I came and told you a secret that I write rubbish poetry I am going to read out a poem and end this. This is the most rubbish poetry you will hear. But keep it in your heart because I am the damned chief guest tonight. If you are after part, EDM. I thought I it would be very cool if I use the word EDM. Is EDM still cook?

Class of 2016 is it cool? No? okay. "if you are after party EDM, stoned sunrise has found you, with dark ship, wrappings, and friends that will not confound you and you start on this journey with a brave heart about you, if you live life at grace towards those around you, you will get where you have to and it won't astound you. If it isn't Ferraris and a white house that downed you, you won't need an entourage to always surround. It's your truth, you will have, that will shelter and ground you, and you remember this day, as the day that unbound you. From the walls of this beautiful school, and the teachers, exams and all the rules that sometimes seem to hound you and let me tell you, you all will be successful let remind you." You know it was "remind" but because it is not rhyming...

So boys and girls, go forth, be free, have fun, make wrong choices, make mistakes. You will still succeed because the gift of education you have from this wonderful institution called Dhirubhai Ambani International School. The love meter has given you and the genes that your parents have provided you with, will always look after you. And when you succeed don't forget to thank your least favorite teacher, because he or she actually cared for you the most.

Love you all and be happy.



Charlie Chaplin

Greatest speech ever made about humanity

I am sorry, but I don't want to be an emperor. That is not my business. I don't want to rule or conquer anyone. I should like to help everyone, if possible, Jew, gentile, black man, white. We all want to help one another. Human beings are like that. We want to live by each other's happiness, not by each other's misery. We don't want to hate and despise one another. In this world there is room for everyone. And the good earth is rich and can provide for everyone. The way of life can be free and beautiful, but we have lost the way. Greed has poisoned men's souls, has barricaded the world with hate, has goose-stepped us into misery and bloodshed.

We have developed speed, but we have shut ourselves in. machinery that gives abundance has left us in want. Our knowledge has made us cynical. Our cleverness, hard and unkind. We think too much and feel too little. More than machinery we need humanity. More than cleverness we need kindness and gentleness. Without these qualities, life will be violent and all will be lost. The aero plane and the radio have brought us closer together. The very nature of these inventions cries out for the goodness in men, cries out for universal brotherhood – for the unity of us all. Even now my voice is reaching millions throughout the world, millions of despairing men, women, and little children. Victims of a system that makes men torture and imprison innocent people. To those who can hear men, I say – do not despair. The misery that is now upon us is but the passing of greed the bitterness of men who fear the way of human progress. The hate of men will pass, and dictators die, and the power they took from the people will return to the people. And so long as men die, liberty will never perish.

Soldiers! Don't give yourselves to the brutes, men who despise you, enslave you, who regiment your lives tell you what to do what to think and what to feel! Who drill you, diet you, treat you like cattle, use you as cannon fodder. Don't give yourselves to these unnatural men, machine men with machine minds and machine hearts! You are not machines! You are not cattle! You are men! You have the love of humanity in your hearts! You don't hate! Only the unloved hate, the unloved and unnatural! Soldier! Don't fight for slavery! Fight for liberty! In the 17th chapter of St Luke it is written: "The kingdom of god is within man", not one man nor a group of men, but in all men! In you! You, the people have the power. The power to create machines. The power to create happiness! You, the people, have the power to make this life free and beautiful, to make this life a wonderful adventure.

Then, in the name of democracy, let us use that power, let us all unite. Let us fight for a new world, a decent world that will give you men a chance to work. That will give youth a future and old age a security. By the promise of these things, brutes have risen to power. But they lie! They do not fulfill that promise. They never will! Dictators free themselves but they enslave the people! Now let us fight to fulfill that promise! Let us fight to free the world, to do away with national barriers, to do away with greed, with hate and intolerance. Let us fight for a world of reason, a world where science and progress will lead to all men's happiness.

Soldiers! In the name of democracy, let us all unite!



Emma Watson

Gender Equality Is Your Issue Too

I was appointed as goodwill ambassador for UN women 6 months ago. And the more I have spoken about feminism the more I realized that fighting for women's rights has too often become synonymous with man-hating. If there is one thing I know for certain, it is that this has to stop. For the record, feminism by definition is: is belief that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities. It is the theory of political, economic, and social equality of the sexes. I started questioning gender-based assumptions a long time ago when I was eight. I was confused at being called "bossy," because I wanted to direct the plays that we would put on for our parents – but the boys were not. When at 14, I started to be sexualized by certain elements of the media. When at 15 my girlfriends started dropping out of their beloved sports teams because they didn't want to appear "muscly." When at 18 my male friends were unable to express their feelings.

I decided that I was feminist and this seemed uncomplicated to me. But my research has shown me that feminism has become an unpopular word. Women are choosing not to identify as feminists. Apparently, I am among the ranks of women whose expressions are seen as too strong, too aggressive, isolating, and anti-men, unattractive even. Why has the world become such an uncomfortable one? I am from Britain and I think it is right that I am paid the same as my male counterparts. I think it is right that I should be able to make decisions about my own body. I think it is right that women be involved on my behalf in the policies and the decisions that will affect my life. I think it is right that socially I am afforded the same respect as men. But sadly I can say that there is no one country in the world where all women can expect to receive these rights. No country in the world can yet say that they have achieved gender equality. These rights I consider to be human rights but I am one of the lucky ones. My life is a sheer privilege because my parents didn't love me less because I was born a daughter.

My school did not limit me because I was a girl. My mentors didn't assume that I would go less far because I might give birth to a child one day. These influencers were the gender equality ambassadors that me who I am today. They may not know it, but they are the inadvertent feminists who are changing the world today. We need more of those. And if you still hate the word- it is not the word that is important it is the idea and the ambition behind it. Because not all women have received the same rights that I have. In fact, statistically, very few have been. In 1997, Hilary Clinton made a famous speech in Beijing about women's rights. Sadly, many of the things that she wanted to change are still true today. But what stood out for me the most was that less than 30 percent of the audience were male. How can we affect change in the world when only half of it is invited or feel welcome to participate in the conversation? Men – I would like to take this opportunity to extend your formal invitation.

Gender equality is your issue too. Because to date, I've seen my father's role as a parent being valued less by society despite my needing his presence as a child as much as my mother's. I've seen young men suffering from mental illness unable to ask for help, for fear it would make them look less of men – or

less of a man. In fact, in the UK suicide is the biggest killer of men between 20-49; eclipsing road accidents, cancer and coronary heart disease. I've seen men made fragile and insecure by a distorted sense of what constitutes male success. Men don't have the benefits of equality either. We don't often talk about men being imprisoned by gender stereotypes but I can see that they are and that when they are free, things will change for women as a natural consequence. If men don't have to be aggressive in order to be accepted, women won't feel compelled to be submissive. If men don't have to control, women won't have to be controlled. Both men and women should feel free to be sensitive. Both men and women should free to be strong. It is time that we all perceive gender on a spectrum instead of two sets of opposing ideals. If we stop defining each other by what we are not and start defining ourselves by who we are, we can all be freer and this is what HeForShe is about. It is about freedom. I want men to take up this mantle. So that their daughters, sisters and mothers can be free from prejudice but also so that their sons have permission to be vulnerable and human too.

Reclaim those parts of themselves they abandoned and in doing so be a truer and completer version of themselves. You might be thinking who is this Harry Potter girl? And what is she doing speaking at the UN? And it's really good question; I have been asking myself the same thing. All I know is that I care about this problem. And I want to make it better. And having seen what I have seen – and given the chance- I feel it is my responsibility to say something. Statesman Edmund Burke said: "All that is needed for the forces of evil to triumph is for good men and women to do nothing." In my nervousness for this speech and in my moments of doubt, I have told myself firmly – if not me, who? It not now, when? If you have similar doubts when opportunities are presented to you I hope that those words will be helpful. Because the reality is that if we do nothing it will take 75 years, or for me to be nearly a hundred before women can expect to be paid the same as men for the same work. 15.5 million girls will be married in the next 16 years as children. And at current rates, it won't be until 2086 before all rural African girls can have a secondary education.

If you believe in equality, you might be one of those inadvertent feminists that I spoke of earlier, and for this I applaud you. We are struggling for a uniting world but the good news is that we have a uniting movement. It is called HeForShe. I am inviting you to step forward, to be seen, and to ask yourself, if not me, who? If not now, when? Thank you very, very much!



Muniba Mazari

We Are All Perfectly Imperfect

Whoa, I'm running short of words right now, but I cannot afford this because I have to speak. Thank you so much for all the love, for all the warmth, thank you for accepting me. Thank you very much. Well, I always start my talk with a disclaimer, and that disclaimer is that I've never claimed to be a motivational speaker. Yes, I do speak, but I feel more like a storyteller because wherever I go I share a story with everyone. Well, it is a story of a woman who's perfectly imperfect life made her who, and what she is today. It's the story of a woman who in pursuit of her dreams and aspirations made other people realize that if you think that your life is hard and you're giving up on that because you think your life is unfair. Think again.

Because when you think that way, you are being unfair your own self. It's the story of a woman who made people realize that sometimes problems are not too big. We are too small because we cannot handle them. It is the story of a woman who we time realized the real happiness doesn't lie in success, money, fame. It lies within, real happiness lies in gratitude. So, I am here and I am going to share the story of that woman. That is my story. The story of gratitude. I love you too. I love you all. I believe in the power of words, many people speak before they think, but I know the value of words. The words can make you, break you. They can heal your soul. They damage you forever. So, I always try to use the positive words in my life, life wherever I go. They call it adversity. I call it opportunity. They call it weakness; I call it strength. They call me disabled, I call myself differently abled. They see my disability. They see my disability; I see my ability. There are some incidents that happen in your life, and those incidents are so strong that they change your DNA. Those incidents or accidents are so strong that they break you physically. They deform your body, but they transform your soul. Those incidents break you. Deform you, but they mold you into the best version of you, and the same thing happened to me. And I am going to share what exactly happened to me.

I was 18 years old when I got married, and this thing I'm sharing for the very first time on an international level. I was 18 years old when I got married. I belonged to a very conservative family, a Baloch family, where good daughters never say no to their parents. My father wanted me to get married, and all I said was if that makes you happy, I'll say, yes! And of course, it was never a happy marriage. Just about after two years of getting married, about nine years ago, I made car accident. Somehow my husband fell asleep, and the car fell in the ditch. He managed to jump out, saved himself. I'm happy for him, but I stayed inside the car, and I sustained a lot of injuries. The list is a bit long. Don't get scared. I'm perfectly fine now. Radius ulna of my right are were fractured. The wrist was fractured. Shoulder bone and collarbone were fractured. My whole ribcage got fractured, and because of the rib cage injury, lungs and liver were badly injured. I couldn't breathe. I lost you renal bowel control, that's why I have to wear the bag wherever I go, but that injury that changed me and my life completely as a person in my perception towards living my life was the spine injury. Three vertebrae of my backbone were completely crushed, and I got paralyzed for the rest of my life. So, this accident took place in a far-flung area in the outskirts of a very small province Baloch, where there was no first aid, no hospital, no ambulance. I was in the

middle of nowhere in that toppled car. Many people came to rescue me. They gave me CPR. They dragged me out of the car. And while they were dragging me out I got the complete transaction of my spinal cord. And now there was this debate going on. Should we keep it here she is going to die? Where should we go? There is no ambulance. There was this four-wheel jeep standing in the corner of the street, they said: put her in the back of the jeep, and take her to the hospital, which is three hours away from this place.

And I still remember that bumpy ride. I was all broken. They threw me at the back of the jeep, and they rushed me to the hospital. That is where I realized that my half body was fractured, and half was paralyzed. I finally ended up in a hospital where I stayed for two and a half months. I underwent multiple surgeries. Doctors have put a lot of titanium in my arm. There is a lot of titanium at my back to fix back. That's why people in Pakistan call me the iron lady of Pakistan. Sometimes I wonder how easy it is for me to describe all this all over again, and somebody has rightly said that when you share your story, and it doesn't make you cry that means you have healed. Those two and a half months in the hospital were dreadful. I will not make up stories just to inspire you. I was at the words of despair. One-day doctor came to me, and he said: well, I heard that you wanted to be an artist, but you ended up being a housewife. I have a bad news for you, you won't be able to paint again because your wrist and your arm are so deformed you won't be able to hold a pen again, and I stayed quiet.

Next day, doctor came to me and said: your spine injury is so bad you won't be able to walk again. I took a deep breath, and I said; it is all right. The next day doctor came to me and said: because of your spine injury and the fixation that you have in your back, you won't be able to give birth to a child again. That day I was devastated. I still remember, I asked my mother: why me? And this where I started to question my existence that why am I eve alive? What's the point of living? I cannot walk. I cannot paint. Fine. I cannot be a mother, and we have this thing in our heads being women that we are incomplete without having children. I am going to be an incomplete woman for the rest of my life. What's the point? People are scared they think I will get divorced. What is going to happen to me? Why me? Why am I alive? We all try to chase this tunnel. We all do this because we see light at the end of the tunnel, which keeps us going.

My friends, in my situation, there was a tunnel, but I had to roll on, but there was no light, and that is where I realized that the words have the power to heal the soul. My mother said to me: this too shall pass. God has a greater plan for you. I don't know what it is, but he surely has, and in all that distress and grief somehow or the other those words were so magical that they kept me going. I was trying to put that smile on my face all the time was hiding. It was so hard to hide the pain, which was there, but all I knew was that if I will give up my mother and brothers will give up too. I cannot see them crying with me. So, what kept me going was, one day I asked my brothers I know I have a deformed hand, but I am tired of looking all these white walls in the hospital and wearing these white scrubs. I am getting tire do this. I want to add more colors to my life. I want to do something. Bring me some colors. Brine me some small canvas. I want to paint. So, the very first painting I made was on my death bed, where I painted for the very first time. It was not just an art piece or just my passion. It was my therapy. What an amazing therapy it was without uttering a single word I could paint my heart out. I could share my story. People used to come and say: what lovely painting so much color. Nobody could see the grief in it. Only I could.

So, that's how I spent two-and-a-half months in my hospital crying. Never complaining or whining, but painting. And then I was discharged, and I went back home, and I went back home and I realized that I have developed a lot of pressure ulcers on my back and on my hip bone. I was unable to sit. There were a lot of infections in my body, a lot of allergies. So, doctors wanted me to lie down on the bed straight. For not six months, for not one year, for two years. I was bedridden, confined in that one room looking

outside the window, listening to the birds chirping and thinking maybe there will be a time when we'll be going out with the family, and enjoying the nature. That was the time where I realized how lucky people are, but they don't realize. That is the time where I realized that the day I am going to sit, I am going to share this pain with everyone to make them realize how blessed they are, and they don't even consider themselves lucky. There are always turning points in your life. There was a rebirth day that I celebrated after two years and two and a half months, when I was able to sit in a wheelchair that was the day when I had the rebirth. I was a completely different person. I still remember the day I sat on the wheelchair for the first time knowing that I'm never going to leave this.

I saw myself in the mirror, and I talked to myself, and I still remember what I said. I cannot wait for a miracle to come and make me walk. I cannot sit in the corner of the room crying, cribbing and begging for mercy because nobody has time. So, I have to accept myself the way I am. The sooner the better. So, I applied the lip color for the first time, and I erased it, and I cried. And I said: what am I doing? A person in a wheelchair should not do this. What will people say? Clean it up put it again. This time I put it for myself because I wanted to feel perfect from within, and that day I decided that I'm going to live life for myself. I am not going to be that perfect person for someone. I am just going to take this moment, and I will make it perfect for myself. And you know how it all began. That I decided that I am going to fight my fears. We all have fears. Fear of unknown. Fear of known. Fear of losing people. Fear of losing help, money. We want to excel in a career. We want to become famous. We want to get money. We are scared all the time. So, I wrote down one my one all those fears, and I decided that I'm going to overcome these fears one at a time. You know what was my biggest fear?

Divorce. I couldn't stand this word. I was trying to cling on to this person who didn't want me anymore, but I said: No. I have to make it work, but the day I decide that this is nothing but a fear, I liberated myself by setting him free, and I made myself emotionally so strong that the day I got the news that he is getting married, I sent him a text, that I'm so happy for you and I wish you all the best. And he knows that I pray for him today. My biggest fear number two was, I won't be able to be a mother again, and that was quite devastating for me, but then I realized, there are so many children in the world all they want is acceptance. So, there is no point of crying just go and adopt one, and that's what I did. I gave my name in different organizations, different orphanages. I didn't mention I'm a wheelchair dying to have a child. So, I just told them that this is Muniba Mazari and she wants to adopt a boy or a girl. Whatsoever, but I want to adopt a child. And I waited patiently. Two years later I got this call from a very small city in Pakistan. I got a call and they said: Are you Muniba Mazari? There is a baby boy, and would like to adopt? When I say, yes. I could literally feel the labor pains. Yes, yes, I am going to adopt him. I am coming to take him home, and when I reached there the man was sitting, and he was looking at me from head to toe, and in back of my head, I kept thinking that: Oh my god! He is going to say: she is on the wheelchair. She doesn't deserve it.

How is she going to take care of him? And I looked at him and I said: do not judge me because I'm on the wheelchair, but you know what he said: he said: I know you will be the best mother of this child. You both are lucky to have each other. And that day, that was two years or two days old and today he's six. You will be surprised to know another bigger fear that I had in me. It was facing people. I used to hide myself from people. When I was on bed for two years I used to keep the door closed. I used to pretend that I'm going to meet anyone tell them that I'm sleeping. You know why? Because I couldn't stand that sympathy that they had for me. They used to treat me like a patient. When I used to smile they used to look at me and say that: you're smiling? Are you okay? I was tired of this question being asked: are you sick? Well, a lady yesterday at the airport asked me: are you sick? And I said: well, besides the spinal

cord injury I'm fine. I guess. But those are really cute questions. They never used to feel cute when I was on the bed.

So, I used to hide myself from people knowing that, oh my god I'm going to see that sympathy in their eyes. It's alright. And today I am here speaking to all these amazing people because I have overcome the fear. You know where you end up being on the wheelchair, what's the most painful thing? That's another feat that people on the wheelchair or the people who are differently abled have in their hearts but they never share. I'll share that with you. The lack of acceptance. People think that they will not be accepted by the people because we in the world of perfect are imperfect. So, I decided that instead of starting an NGO for disability awareness, which I know will not help anyone. I started to appear more in public. I started to paint. I always wanted to. I've done a lot of exhibitions. I'm Pakistan's first wheelchair-bound artist. I've done a lot of modeling campaigns, different campaigns for brands like Toni and Guy. I have done some really funny breaking the barriers kind of modeling. There was this one by the name of clown town where I became a clown because I know that clowns have hearts too. And then I also decided that if I really want to make the difference, I am not going to let people use me for their polio campaigns, where they will make you a victim or an emblem of misery and mercy and will say that you know what give polio drops your children or they will become like this girl.

I decided that I'm going to join the national TV of Pakistan as an anchorperson, and I have been doing a lot of shows for last three years. So, when you accept yourself the way you are, the world recognizes you. It all starts from within. I became, thank you. I became the national goodwill ambassador for UN women Pakistan, and now, I speak for the rights of women, children. We talk about inclusion, diversity, gender equality which is a must. I was featured in BBC hundred women for 2015. I am one of the Forbes 30 under 30 for 2016, and it all didn't happen alone. You all are thriving in your careers. You have bigger dreams and aspirations in life. Always remember one thing: on the road to success, there is always we, not me. Do not think that you alone can achieve things. No! there is always another person who is standing behind you, may be not coming on the forefront but behind you, praying for you and supporting you. Never lost that person. Never!

No matter how much I say that I couldn't find a hero, so I became one. I still want to recognize three people in my life, who literally changed my life completely, and I get inspiration from them every single day. Waleed Khan, many people know about the terrorist attacks in Pakistan. We have lost many people, and I am sharing this with a very heavy heart because we actually have lost a lot of people in this huge turmoil of terrorism. These people are barbarians. They do not see people. They are there. They are even worse than animals. They have killed people in mosques. They have killed people in churches, temples, even in schools. There was this terrorist attack in army public school Peshawar. Where these terrorists entered in an examination hall, and they killed our children. And in that attack that day this beautiful boy Waleed Khan who was my hero. My real-life hero was the proctor, who was taking care of the students, was keeping an eye on the students. Those barbarians shot him three times in the face, five times on his body, and he fell down. I was asked to give a talk in the school after a week of that terrorist attack.

With a very heavy heart, I went there, and I spoke. We sang a few national songs. I thought that maybe I have done my part, but deep inside it was killing me. I could see children injured. I could see children sitting on the wheelchairs looking at me wondering: what next? What was our fault just because we were here to give examination we been shot? So, many people so many children lost their friends. Their classrooms were empty the next day they went to the classroom. So, this kid Waleed Khan, I was asked that he is in a hospital right now, and you have to go and see him, and motivate him and tell him that it is going to be okay. And when I saw Waleed Khan coming on the wheelchair for the first time in front of me. His face was all deformed. His leg was fractured. His arm was fractured. He couldn't walk. He lost

his teeth. He cannot sneeze. He cannot smell. He cannot eat, and I kept thinking: what should I say? That everything is going to be all right? No! nothing is all right. And while I was juggling with words, what to say, what not to say, this beautiful child Waleed Khan came to me, and he said: are you Muniba Mazari? I said: yes. He said: Let's take a selfie. And with that beautiful toothless smile of Waleed Khan, we took that beautiful selfie that I still have with me.

I don't share that here because he was in a very bad shape at that time. And that is where I realized that when I was thinking too much about his deformities, he is happy with himself. He doesn't even care because today he goes in the same school, and when somebody asks him that what happened to your face? Why so many scars? You know what he says? These scars are my medals, and I wear them with pride. And how beautifully he says: the terrorists wanted me not to study. I am going to study. I will become a doctor one day. And this is my way of taking revenge from those terrorists. Another like a real-life hero, of course, my son. His name is Niele. I learned so much from this kid. The first and foremost thing is patience. How to be patient when you know that your mother cannot walk.

When you know that your mother is different from the other women. When you know that your mother cannot go out and play with you. How to stay calm. He loves football, and when we got the very first football, he was four years old, he was super excited. I still remember, he came in the room, and he said: Mom, let's play football. And he kept the ball in my feet, and he said: let's kick it. And that day I felt disabled. I said: I cannot kick the ball. And I was down with the same face. He looked at me and he said: well, that I all right. Your legs are not working, but your hands do, let's play, catch the ball. You know what that day he made me realize that when you think your glass is half-empty, come on, your glass is half-full. It is all in here and here.

Last but not least, the woman who made me realize that heroes have no gender. The woman who believed in me even when I was completely at the verge of despair where everybody left, she was there. And every time I looked at her without saying anything, she used to look at me and said: this too shall pass. God has a bigger plan for you, and one day you will say that: oh my god, that is why god has chosen me. She never cried in front of me. She has always said that there will be haters, there will be naysayers, there will be disbelievers, and then there will be you proving them wrong, my mother. Whatever I am today, I am nothing without her. I am nothing without her. Thank you mama, I wish you were here. Thank you for making me who I am today. You know what we human beings have a problem out of many problems, there is one more, and this is self-created one. We always expect ease from life. We have this amazing fantasy about life. This is how things should work. This is my plan. It should go as per my plan. If that doesn't happen, we give up.

So, my dear friends let me tell you one thing; I never wanted to be on a wheelchair, never thought of being on the wheelchair. I was always aspiring to do bigger things but had no idea that for that I have to pay the price to be where I am today. It's a very heavy price. This life is a test and a trial and tests are trials are never supposed to be easy so when you're expecting ease from life and life gives you lemons then you make the lemonade, and then do not blame life for that because you were expecting ease from a trial. Trials make she was stronger, a better person. Life is a trial. Every time you realize that. It is okay to be scared. It is okay to cry. Everything is okay, but giving up should not be an option. They always say that failure is not an option, failure should be an option because when you fail, you get up, and then you fail, and then you get up, and that keeps you going. That's how humans are strong. Failure is an option, should be an option, but giving up is not. Never. We have this thing in minds. We call it perfection. We want everything perfect. We want ourselves to be perfect. There is this image in our head about everything, perfect life, perfect relationships, perfect career, perfect amount of money that we need to

earn, no matter what. Nothing is perfect in this world. We all are perfectly imperfect, and that is perfectly right.

That's all right. You... we were sent here not to become the perfect people. Those people who tell you how to look perfect, even those people are imperfect. Trying to fight this fear of looking imperfect. I used to be perfect. I still remember, I got this compliment years ago when I used to walk. Oh my god, look at you. You are fair. You are tall. You are perfect. Look at me now! Only the perfect eyes can see that. Only the perfect eyes will see that. So, yes. In all those imperfections, you have to listen to your heart. You don't have to look good for people. You don't have to be perfect just because other people want you to be perfect. If your soul is perfect from within, that's all right. This is all what you want. This is all what you need to be. Our society has made very weird. Very weird kind of norms to look perfect and great. For men it's different, for women, it is different. We think too much about what people say. We listen to ourselves too little. You know what makes you perfect? When you make someone smile.

You know what makes you perfect? When you try to do something good for the people around you. You what makes you perfect? When you feel someone's pain, and how beautiful pain is that it connects you with people. No other medium can connect you with others, but the pain. That's why I always say: I'm in pain, and that's a blessing in disguise for me. Today, just because I'm in pain and I'm on the wheelchair, I work for children being the head of CSR for a company. We conduct medical camps in far-flung areas of Pakistan where so many kids die because they don't have medical facilities. And I personally believe just because they cannot afford to live doesn't mean we let them die. So, we give them money. We give them medical treatment. We try to heal their wounds. Physical and emotional. And I also worked for the beautiful people. We call them third gender, the transgender community of Pakistan. You know what connects me with them? All my imperfections. When I go and I hug them, they never judged me, and this very good friend of mine her name is Bijli. Bijli means electricity. She calls herself electricity, and I said: are you electricity? She says: no. I'm lightning. I am as strong as lightening. Because, we have a very bad power outage. So, she doesn't want me to call her electricity. So, she says: I am very strong. I'm panda. I am lightning. She came to me and the first time I hugged her, she said, "you are just like me," and I said, "yes, I am like you." Because to people, we are so imperfect. So, how beautiful these imperfections are that because of these imperfections you can connect with people then why are we all running after being perfect. What's the point?

Every time I go in public, I always smile. It's always a big smile on my face, and people ask me, "don't you get tired of smiling all the time? What's the secret? I always say one thing that I have stopped worrying about the things that I have lost, the people that I've lost, things and people who were meant to be with me are with me. And sometimes, somebody's absence makes you a better person. Cherish their absence. It's always, it's always a blessing in disguise. I always say that people are so lucky they don't even realize you must be thinking: okay, you are lucky in what sense? Well! The breath that you just took was a blessing. Embrace it! There are so many people in the world who are dreaming to live a life that you are living right now. You have no idea. Embrace each, and every breath that you are taking. Celebrate your life. Live it. Don't die before your death. We all die. We live this one routine of a day for 75 years, and we call it life. No, that's not life. If you are still thinking why you have been sent here, if you are still juggling with the concept of why you were here, you haven't lived yet. You work hard, you make money, you do it for yourself. That's not life. You go out. You seek for people who need your help, you make their lives better, you become that sponge which can absorb all the negativity, and you become that person who can emit beautiful positive vibes, and when you realize that you have changed someone's life and because if you this person didn't give up, that is the day when you live. Always.

We were talking about gratitude. Why I smile all the time? I cry all night when nobody sees me because I am a human and I have to keep the balance. And I smile all the day because I know that if I will smile I can make people smile. That keeps me going. Be grateful for what you have, and you will always, always end having more. But if you'll cry, and if you'll cry for the little things that you don't have or the things that you have lost, you will never ever have enough. Sometimes, we are too busy thinking about the things that we don't have that we forget to cherish the blessings that we have. I am not saying that I'm not healthy and that makes me, unlucky, but yes, it is hard. It is hard when I say that I cannot walk. It is hard to say when I wear this bag. It hurts, but I have to keep going because never giving up is the way to live, always.

So, I'll end my talk in a very short note. Live your life fully. Accept yourself the way you are. Be kind to yourself. I'll repeat. Be kind to yourself. And only then you can be kind to others. Love yourself and spread that love. Life will be hard. There will be turmoils. There will be trials, but that will only make you stronger. Never give up. The real happiness doesn't lie in money or success or fame, I have this all I never wanted this. Real happiness lies in gratitude. Be grateful. Be alive. And live every moment.

Thank you so much everyone. Thank you.



Nick Vujicic

How to Stop a Bully?

Well guys, I was born this way, and there's no medical reason why that happened. My brother and my sister were born with arms and legs. And sometimes in life, things happen that don't make sense. My doctors never thought that I'd be able to walk, and today, I am walking. I'm from Australia, anybody want to one day go to Australia? It's such a cool place. And I now live in Los Angeles; I'm southern California boy. So I only live about four hours from here. And today I am going to tell you, man - I love freaking people out. One day, I am in car, I'm in the front seat – I am not driving of course. Can you imagine if I am driving a car? They reckon they can put a joystick that thing that controls my wheelchair – we can put that in a car. Like how fully sick is that? Imagine if I get pulled over by the cops? Can I have your driver's license please?

Yeah, but it's over there; you're going to have to get it. Imagine if I'm in big trouble! Put your hands up! Uhhh... get out of your car! So I am in the front passenger seat, we're at the traffic lights, and this car comes up next to us and this girl is looking to me. And I am looking at her, she is looking at me, all she sees is my head, right? She has no idea that I have no arms and no legs. So I'm thinking, cool. I'm going freak you out. So I get the seatbelt in my mouth, and I loosen it like this, so that I can freely move. And she's looking at me like "Why are you eating your seatbelt? So, I pull it, the belt is loose, I can move. Now she is looking at me, full 100% attention and focus. And just imagine all you see is my head, all right? You might want to put your hand to your face to cut off the rest of my body. So you can really see the effect, that's it. Exactly. Here we go, ready? I just did this. And her face, man, she was like she nearly ran the red light, man. It was so good. My parents always said, Nick, you don't know what you can achieve until you try it. And the doctors looked at me and said, he's not going to walk, he's not gonna go to school, he is not going to do anything in his life. And then my parents; they just loved me like crazy, and said you've got to try.

Try this, try that, try this, try that, and I am thinking sometimes, like, mom and Dad, you're crazy, I have no arms and legs. How would I ever be able to do this or do that? But they encouraged me, and they loved me. And as human beings, we're waiting for stuff like that, we all want love. Everybody say it – loved. Very good. We all want love. I went to school, and I wanted to be cool, you know. You go to school and you want to be accepted. So, you see these guys, and you're like, oh man, you know? Everyone swears, like every third sentence. F this, F that, and F'n this, and FF, what, they think they are cool, you know. And so I am thinking maybe I need to be like them to be cool. And then you compare each other with how we look and I wish I was smarter, I wish I was taller, I wish I was shorter, I was more popular, I wish I did this, I wish I didn't have that. I wish my life was different. That was me when I was about years old; I looked at myself, and I looked at everybody else, and everyone else had more than me. And I asking,

why? Why me? Have you ever asked the why me questions, but get nowhere? If I had no answers from the doctors, and If I had no answers from my parents, I still have a choice, every day in my life, to keep going or give up.

You see this book up here? This is my favorite book in the whole world book, the bible. And here I am. And here I am, and for me, that's my full potential in all that I can be here on earth. And so encouragement takes me closer to all that I can be, and discouragement takes me away. You see it only takes three seconds for someone to tease me when I was at school, and just say ewwww, you are ugly. Eww, you can't do this and you can't do that. Some of you are thinking like man seriously? You had kids picking on you? How heartless are those kids? Picking on me with no limbs? You probably say, wee, I'm not I wouldn't pick on a kid with limbs. But why would you pick on anyone? Well, because it's fun, it is just culture. Ok, we'll get to that. But for me, facing all that stuff? I'm getting these seeds, everybody say seeds, S-E-E-D-S, seeds. Have you seen the pictures of the Sequoia reds up here in California? These huge trees like some of the trunks could be nearly as big as this room. I've seen those photos where they've actually dug out a tunnel in a trunk of a tree - you can drive a full-size SUV right through it. That all started with a little seed. If you leave a seed of lies in your heart and in your mind, and you don't know the truth, if you don't know the truth, you will die with the life.

I started dying, because I started believing what I was told. I want you to know the three things that I needed to come to in my life is the truth of my values, the truth of my purpose, and the truth of my destiny. I want you to know something. In our mind, we put ourselves down all the time. I want to ask you today, do you think I'm cool enough to be your friend? But I don't swear, I don't use the F-bomb, am I still cool enough to be your friend? But I don't tease people, am I still cool enough to be your friend? But I have no arms, no legs, seriously. You would be my friend, even though I have no arms, no legs.

So you are telling me it actually doesn't matter, right? If it actually doesn't matter, for how we look, then why do we tease each other for how we look if it actually doesn't matter? Why is it that we look ourselves in the mirror, and we say, well we are having fun! Oh year, man it's just part of culture, man. There were twelve people one day teased me. Taking me away from my hope. And I can put a pretty brave face on but cry on the inside. For real. Oh, it doesn't hurt! It hurts. There was this one bully, I became his target for three weeks. And very time I'd go by him I was 13, he was 17. I was in my chair. I am only 4'5 in my other chair, my old chair. He's like 6 something, so he is huge, right? So I am looking up to him, and every time I would go by him, he is like, hey, there is Nick! He has no... and you can imagine what he said. And I am like, what's his problem, man? So I would try to avoid him, and I was so embarrassed, because he would say really loud and everybody would be looking and some would be laughing. I am like, what is this guy's problem, man? So one day, after three weeks, I went up to him and I said, "Hey, he is like, "Hey." And I said, "can you please stop it?" he said stop what? I said stop teasing me." He said what are talking about? I said every time I walk by you say that stuff." He's like what stuff? He didn't know how to take me on. So I am looking up at him and said, no man. Every time I walk by, you say exactly this and I want you to stop.

I forgive you but stop it. He is like, oh it is not hurting you. Now, I could have said, no or I could have said yeah. It takes a level of humility to actually say umm, actually, I don't like that. It's killing me and I said, "Ah, yeah, it is hurting me". He said, "All right, I am sorry man. I was just, you know, playing around." I said, "Give me hug." He said, "what?" all right. So, I have him a hug. I am hugging a machine. We made the Guinness book of world records: 1749 hugs in one year. We did it last year. My arms fell off, all right? The scary thing about hugging so many people is that anyone can just pick me up and take me home. Like, what am I going to do, like, hit them or something? Pretty mean head-butt, right? I want you to know you might be playing around. I can pretty much say that 98% of you have teased someone in your life. I tried commit suicide because of people who thought they were having fun, not knowing the hell that I was going through. The people you are teasing, what if the person you are

teasing is the person who is thinking of committing suicide. What if the person you are teasing is the one who is trying to commit suicide, who hates their life because of you. You don't know if the person you are teasing is the son or daughter of a drunk at home getting abused. And all they need is someone like you to keep on pushing them this way.

We need hope, so find something else to do. Find positive things in your own life. I don't care how you look, I will never ever tease you. I will never tease you! I could tease you, I could be tough. People think that bullying is tough? It isn't tough! My wheelchair, this is tough. This thing, man, I will tell you something, you ready? This wheelchair. This thing is tough. When my friend built this for me, he said, "You are going to love it." I said what, does it go fast? He said no, but it is tough. And I said, well, what do you mean? He said, you will find it out. The torque in these motors, at the bottom at the back, this thing, if someone's holding it, I am telling you, it can go 90 degrees. I went 80 degrees up, alright.

The rest of the speech isn't that much interesting. So, I didn't write its text. But you have access to its audio.

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Orator: Amir Khan

Interviewer: Zainab

For A Better India

Hello everyone. I am Zainab Salbiand. I have the greatest honor of being on stage with the India's biggest movie star, Aamir Khan. I mean we are talking beyond the actions of movies of James Bond and Daniel Craig. We are talking beyond the romances of Richard Gere. We are talking beyond the charms of George Clooney, we are talking ladies and gentlemen, above and beyond, all of that. A man who has been acting since the age of nine, who has conquered the hearts of six hundred million, yes, six hundred million Indians. This is half of the Indian Population. This man has done it. Unbelievable!

And in 2012, he surprises India, he surprises the world, with launching a new TV talk show, Satyamev Jate, that tackles social issues, taboos heads-on, I mean you just put yourself out there.

What inspired you do do that?

Amir Khan: Well, a big good evening to everyone here. I think it started somewhere when I was a very small child and it began with my mother, I think. Ahh, my mother has been a big influence on me and uh, I'll an incident of my life which stayed with me all along and that is I used to play a lot of tennis when I was a kid and competitive tennis, you know, state level, national level. I was pretty good at that time and she knew how anxious I was about the game, how much I loved the game. And every time I had a match, she'd be waiting for me to come home and when I would come home, she'd ask me: "Did you win, did you lose?" usually I would win, so my answer would be I won. And then after about five minutes, the first time she did it, it really shook me. After about five minutes, she'd come to me and say: "You know the boy who lost to you today, he would have reached home about now and his mom would have asked him the same question and he would have said, he lost, so his mother must be feeling really bad right now." And the first time she said that me, it like hit me. I mean her ability to think for another, a mother she's never seen, never met, really hit home to me. I don't think she was meaning to tell me or teach me anything, that is just how she is and I think a lot of what I am, it is the result of her. Uh, I think the second person who's had been a big influence with me, is my friend Satyajit Bhatkal. 3

The rest of the speech was not that much interesting.



Kamala Harris (Wife of Joe Biden)

Victory

Good evening. Thank you. So, Congressman John Lewis, Congressman John Lewis, before his passing, wrote:

“Democracy is not a state. It is an act.” And what he meant was that America’s democracy is not guaranteed. It is only as strong as our willingness to fight for it, to guard it and never take it for granted. And protecting our democracy takes struggle. It takes sacrifice. But there is joy in it, and there is progress. Because we the people have the power to build a better future.

And when our very democracy was on the ballot in this election, with the very soul of America at stake, and the world watching, you ushered in a new day for America.

To our campaign staff and volunteers, this extraordinary team — thank you for bringing more people than ever before into the democratic process and for making this victory possible. To the poll workers and election officials across our country who have worked tirelessly to make sure every vote is counted — our nation owes you a debt of gratitude as you have protected the integrity of our democracy.

And to the American people who make up our beautiful country, thank you for turning out in record numbers to make your voices heard.

And I know times have been challenging, especially the last several months — the grief, sorrow and pain, the worries and the struggles. But we have also witnessed your courage, your resilience and the generosity of your spirit.

For four years, you marched and organized for equality and justice, for our lives, and for our planet. And then, you voted. And you delivered a clear message. You chose hope and unity, decency, science and, yes, truth.

You chose Joe Biden as the next president of the United States of America. And Joe is a healer, a uniter, a tested and steady hand, a person whose own experience of loss gives him a sense of purpose that will help us, as a nation, reclaim our own sense of purpose. And a man with a big heart who loves with abandon. It’s his love for Jill, who will be an incredible first lady. It’s his love for Hunter, Ashley and his grandchildren, and the entire Biden family. And while I first knew Joe as vice president, I really got to know him as the father who loved Beau, my dear friend, who we remember here today. And to my husband, Doug; our children, Cole and Ella; my sister, Maya; and our whole family — I love you all more than I can ever express. We are so grateful to Joe and Jill for welcoming our family into theirs on this incredible journey. And to the woman most responsible for my presence here today — my mother, Shyamala Gopalan Harris, who is always in our hearts.

When she came here from India at the age of 19, she maybe didn’t quite imagine this moment. But she believed so deeply in an America where a moment like this is possible. And so, I’m thinking about her

and about the generations of women — Black women, Asian, White, Latina, Native American women who throughout our nation's history have paved the way for this moment tonight. Women who fought and sacrificed so much for equality, liberty and justice for all, including the Black women, who are often, too often overlooked, but so often prove that they are the backbone of our democracy. All the women who have worked to secure and protect the right to vote for over a century: 100 years ago with the 19th Amendment, 55 years ago with the Voting Rights Act and now, in 2020, with a new generation of women in our country who cast their ballots and continued the fight for their fundamental right to vote and be heard.

Tonight, I reflect on their struggle, their determination and the strength of their vision — to see what can be, unburdened by what has been. And I stand on their shoulders. And what a testament it is to Joe's character that he had the audacity to break one of the most substantial barriers that exists in our country and select a woman as his vice president.

But while I may be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last, because every little girl watching tonight sees that this is a country of possibilities. And to the children of our country, regardless of your gender, our country has sent you a clear message: Dream with ambition, lead with conviction, and see yourselves in a way that others may not, simply because they've never seen it before, but know that we will applaud you every step of the way.

And to the American people: No matter who you voted for, I will strive to be a vice president like Joe was to President Obama — loyal, honest and prepared, waking up every day thinking of you and your family. Because now is when the real work begins. The hard work. The necessary work. The good work. The essential work to save lives and beat this epidemic. To rebuild our economy so it works for working people. To root out systemic racism in our justice system and society. To combat the climate crisis. To unite our country and heal the soul of our nation.

And the road ahead will not be easy. But America is ready, and so are Joe and I.

We have elected a president who represents the best in us. A leader the world will respect and our children will look up to. A commander in chief who will respect our troops and keep our country safe. And a president for all Americans.



Jeff Bezos, Zoya Akhtar

Amazon in India

Shah Rukh Khan: Tell me have, you seen any perceptible change in India apart from the traffic, when you came last?

Jeff Bezos: Apart from the traffic. You know it's interesting. So, I guess the first time I came to India was about 11 years ago. I don't know that I have seen perceptible changes of integrate magnitude. The thing what I would actually say is that, I notice there are certain things that seem to me to be the same and I love those things. One of the things I notice every time I come here is that, there is so much energy here and dynamism and color. The word I would use for it is, the whole place seems so full of life. And everywhere you go every single thing you do and the diversity of India.

When I come here, I've never seen a more diverse place. Everywhere I travel in the world nowhere more diverse than India. So, the energy, self-improvement. Every time I come here, I find that the people that I talk to are focused on and interested in being better tomorrow than they are today. Everybody here seems to be focused on self-improvement.

Zoya Akhtar: Did you think online retail would get this big?

Jeff Bezos: Oh no. So, you know when I started Amazon, it was 25 years ago. I started Amazon in 1994. When I went to seek investors, the first question I had to answer is, what is the internet? None of my investors had ever heard of the internet. And the idea that I had in mind was to build a bookstore. I realized that we could build a store, which would have every book ever printed in any language, in print or out of print and we could do that online. It would be impossible in a physical store and that was the founding idea of amazon.

But did I expect what would happen today. No, you know we started, I've been at Amazon when it was one person, me. When it was 10 people when it was a hundred people when it was a thousand people. And today it's you know more than 700,000 people and approaching 70,000 people just here in India. So, no I did not predict that and actually I think if anybody had predicted that they would have needed to be immediately institutionalized in a mental facility. Because it's not a normal thing to have happen. My dream when I started Amazon was that one day, we might be able to afford a forklift.

So, it's been a very fun journey for me, and by the way I still tap dance into work. I'm having so much fun.

Zoya Akhtar: Is there anything you don't sell on Amazon?

Jeff Bezos: Anything we don't sell.

Zoya Akhtar: Or anything you tried to sell and didn't work? Anything that you decided not to go?

Jeff Bezos: There are things we tried to sell that didn't work, we tried to sell a phone, call the fire phone. We worked on it for four years and no one bought it. I think my mother bought one and I don't think she was that happy with it. But no, there are things that we deliberately don't sell. We don't sell guns; we don't sell tobacco. There are things we don't sell, but that we make deliberate decisions about. But other than those things we try to sell everything that anyone might want to buy and we're trying to make it as convenient as possible for people.

You know in the early 21st century we're all busy. Everybody in this room is busy, and if you can save people time let them spend more time with their families and with their friends and doing the things that they really enjoy, then you're doing them real service.

Shah Rukh Khan: Most of the people here Jeff are from lots of them I see are from the film industry. It was very heartening when Amazon started creating original content. So, we don't think of our films as just products, you know. So, there's a very clear demarcation. You know, some of them think, 'we do a film for the creative fun of it, for the artistry of it.'

Oh, yeah, this one is for business. We don't look down upon it, but we clearly demarcate it. So, we know this girl, this boy artist, we won't make the money, this one is for money. Now you are into original content the company's into original content in a big way. What's your stance on it? Are you still that person who says, no? I'm going to do this for the creativity the artistry forget the mark - the business, no, I'm doing this only for the business? Or, is it a mix of both and you say just put on lots of stuff let someone come on the story and find whatever they want?

Jeff Bezos: I think this is a great question. It's actually something we debate, and I think, if you look at the very best things in the world, they do both. I think this is a golden age of television. So, when you look at you know TV series today the really good TV series are in terms of quality, they're as good as the very best movies have ever been. And you now, you're getting the best storytellers to come to television you're getting the best actors to now come do television. We're one of the great storytellers is right here. Thank you for the help.

Zoya Akhtar: Thank you.

Jeff Bezos: And this is a big deal. When you can get the very best people, because this is one of those businesses where the viewer is always looking for something a little fresh. And so, you can never find a formula, because as soon as you find a formula it's not fresh anymore. They're always looking for something a little new. So, it really takes human ingenuity; it takes people the storytellers have to be in touch with the zeitgeist. What I want Amazon studios to be all over the world, I want us to be known as the most talent friendly studio in the world.

The reason you need to do that, thank you, is because at the end of the day it is the talent that makes those stories. Storytelling is the oldest thing that humans do. We've been doing it for thousands and thousands of years long before there was written language before there was any medium to convey it. People sat around and they told each other stories, and it's how we teach each other things. We learn from stories; we learn from fiction. We learn from fiction because we get to live an alternate life, in that moment you watch this and you're learning.

So, it can be fun, it can be action, it can be funny, it can be comedy. But the very best things take those elements and teach a little something. There's something in there that you walk away with and you're inspired by it. It doesn't matter if it's drama, comedy, anything, you're going to walk away with something and there needs to be lightness. You know you can't watch something that's just all heavy and you're like, 'Oh my God, I want to kill myself now.' There also has to be that gesture there has to be somebody who brings you out and lets you breathe a little bit. So, and this is so hard to do.

That's why there is so much bad, so many bad movies and so many bad TV shows. Because it is one of

the hardest things that humans do is tell riveting, engaging, inspiring stories. But when you get it right it's a lever that can change the world.

Zoya Akhtar: Are you a competitive producer?

Jeff Bezos: Am I what?

Zoya Akhtar: A competitive producer and I don't mean business wise; I mean creatively. Like, would you see a film or a show on another platform, like what you described which is brilliant and be like, 'why don't I have this?'

Jeff Bezos: Well, I have regrets. I mean we've turned down things that later were so good. I wish we hadn't turned them down. But we've also picked up things that other people turned down and we've made them great. So, the truth is the storytelling is infinite. If I tell a good story it doesn't make your story bad. These are not substitute products, you know. So, it is I don't feel like you get the best results with storytelling by trying to make sure that other people's stories are worse than your stories.

This is one of those things where you can, there can be a lot of good stories in the world. You're really competing not against others; you're competing against this just the complexity of how hard it is. That's why, you guys have all seen this. If you're in the entertainment business, there are movies and TV shows where you know the people involved, and every one of those people is talented and still the final product is bad. It happens. And because there's a little bit of mystery to it, we don't know how to do it perfectly. And that's what makes it so fun. Because there isn't artistic element to it. It is not science.

Shah Rukh Khan: Is there something you think is a sheer waste of time?

Jeff Bezos: Look there are a lot of things that are a waste of time. You know, when you think about your life, I think I often tell people that I work with. If you can get, because people have very high standards for how they want their work life to be. I said, 'Look, if you can get your work life to be where you enjoy half

of it, that is amazing.' Because very few people ever achieve that because the truth is everything comes with overhead. That's reality, everything comes with pieces that you don't like. You could be a supreme court justice and there's still going to be pieces of your job you don't like.

You can be a university professor and it's still going to be... you have to go to committee meetings, and you have to do. You know there are every job comes with pieces you don't like and we need to say, that's part of it. And not resent those pieces or try not to, but also try to minimize them. I tell senior executives; you should have the least stress. You know there's this weird I think false idea that CEOs, I'm a CEO.

There's this false idea that CEOs are under the most stress. Well, I look at that, I'm like why, you're in charge. Why don't you delegate the stress? It's your choice. So, you have to figure out how to set up your life in such a way that you can minimize the things.

I find people don't dislike hard work; what people dislike what is being out of control. Like, they can't control their life, they can't control their environment. This happens to me when I get over scheduled. I hate being over scheduled. I want some time to be able to think and free myself, we all have the same amount of time in the world. Nobody has more time than anybody else. And when you become a very successful person one of the things you start to get over scheduled.

You have this event, you had to agree to do this and maybe last night you were like, 'why did I agree to do this.' I have to go on stage tomorrow, I wish I were really with my family and you know or I hope maybe not this case. Let's say that you like this one, but in general that kind of thing happens. So, you have to guard your time and try to say a little bit flexible. So, that's for me it's not a waste of time, but I like to have some freedom of movement rather than having every minute of every day scheduled.

Zoya Akhtar: What is your one hot tip for somebody on the onset of their career?

Jeff Bezos: So, a young person starting their career, I think there are probably a lot of things. Some of them are very well known and people have heard them many times they're still true. One of those that you should always focus on a young person should find something that they're passionate about to do. And that's not going to surprise anyone, it's a clear thing to do. It's very hard, if you don't love your work, you're never going to be great at it. I think the other thing I would suggest to any young person even before they start their career is to really think about their choices. Because I find young people, when I was young I had I made this mistake too.

You can get very fixed on your gifts, so everybody has gifts. You know you have gifts and you have things that you didn't get gifted. Maybe you're extremely beautiful, maybe you're extremely good at mathematics. Maybe you, there are a lot of things that you can be given. But those things can confuse you because they're not the things that construct your life. It's your choices that construct your life, not your gifts. You can celebrate your gifts; be proud of them be happy of them. Actually, don't be proud of them, be celebratory of them. You can't be proud because they're gifts, they were given to you, you didn't earn them.

You can only be proud of the things you earn and so as I got older, I started to realize I wasn't proud of my gifts. I was always good at school; school was always easy for me and I was always proud that I was a great student. I got A's in all my classes; I was good at math all of that. And I thought that's who I was, but it's not true. Those are the things that are gifts what was hard for me is deciding to work hard, deciding to use my gifts in certain ways. To challenge myself to do things that I didn't think I could do. To put myself in uncomfortable situations.

We all get, I would say to a young person you can choose a life of ease and comfort or you can choose a life of service and adventure. Which one of those when you're 90 years old, are you going to be more proud of?

Shah Rukh Khan: I want to know Jeff, where I started from actually. Is there a job, if it wasn't Amazon if it wasn't business related? Is there something else you started all over again at this age and stage and you took on a different profession? Would there be one that is close to your heart?

Jeff Bezos: I would be very curious today, if I were a young college student today, I would be very interested in biotechnology. I think biotechnology is a just a fascinating arena that probably in the near in the next 10 or 20 years is going to be a golden age of biotech. One of the golden ages that's happening right now before our eyes is also artificial intelligence and machine learning. So, that's another arena that I would be very interested in. My backup career is I'm a very good bartender. So, if all else fails, you'll see me at the local bar, and I'll be making drinks slowly but they'll be good.

Zoya Akhtar: If there's one thing you could have more of, what would that be?

Jeff Bezos: One thing I could have more of, I mean the obvious answer is time. You know it is time to do, I like time. I'm not efficient with my time, because efficiency there's an embedded assumption when you're being efficient. And the embedded assumption is that you know where you're going. I like to wander, because it's wandering that allows you to invent and to explore and to follow your curiosity. But wandering is very time consuming, and so if I could have one more thing it would just be more time.

Shah Rukh Khan: So, wonderful. A big round of applause for Jeff and for Zoya. Thank you so much.



Rashmika Mandanna

Dream Big

Hello. How are you? All good? Congratulations to all the winners. Super, super proud. I'm nobody to tell this. But thank you so much for all your hard work. And I'm so glad to be here. Thank you so much for all of you inviting me. Thank you, means a lot. So I had one speech prepared for the gathering, but I don't know if somewhere someone had told me you have to tell your, you know, life story. Anyway. So I don't think my life story is good enough for this gathering. So what I'm going to do is it's called SHE Empowerment.

Where do I start? Okay. So, generally, I've been called, you know, "the smiling Queen," or something they say out there, but is it too loud? should I? Is it fine? Okay. Okay. So yeah, like I was saying, I always been called "the smiling Queen." And I, yes, of course, I always, always keep smiling. For all the love I get for all the appreciation I get from all of you who watch my films. But you know, one of the other reasons why I smile? All of us, I'm pretty sure that all the girls here, smile through the sadness, through the loneliness, through the anger, through the frustration, smile is a superpower, you know. Yeah, same thing with me. I keep doing it, and one day, I keep thinking, I'll keep smiling till that day where my smile turns into a real one from the heart. But yes, this is a superpower. And that's why women are, I think, the most pure.

I don't know, I don't know how to say the mother is a purest being in the whole world is what they say, right? Yeah. I'm so glad to be born a girl. I'm so glad to be born a girl in this generation.

Having such people protect us with all that they've got. I don't know. I'm just super glad, super proud, and yeah, well. So let me just start introducing myself. I'm Rashmika. For all those who know me a big, big Hi!

And for all those who don't well, I'm an actor in the southern industry, and I hope soon you all get to know me as well. That's for my introduction. I don't think I should go on more on that. Well, since I was a really small girl, I still remember all that my mother said was you should never let someone else see you angry, see you cry, see you feel any of the negative emotions because apparently, that's, that's showing your weakness, right? That's what my mom has always told me. And I think that's one of the reasons why I just don't know what else to do now. I actually genuinely do not know how to cry. Do you know that? Like, I have to work so hard to actually cry on screen, I cannot do it. And I look like an idiot when I cry on stage. I mean cry on screen, I'm sorry. So yeah, I think that is the one thing I can't do. But I don't know, I don't know, I don't know what to say nowadays I see women doing so many things.

Women accomplishing so many things in different fields. And I feel too little. I feel like, what am I doing?

I don't know. Is it good enough? Is it enough for me to get all of this love and appreciation for something so small that I'm doing? I don't know. I don't. I still feel like this is not enough, and I want to do a lot more.

And well, I'm just a girl from a small town in Karnataka called Virajpet in Kodagu district. I don't know if you guys are aware of it. From there I don't know how my life has happened. I don't know at the age of 23; I'm here talking to such a gathering. But I'm, I'm glad that I am, and I don't know if I want to say that I'm proud of myself yet because I don't think I'm done yet. I've just started, and I feel like I'm in the process of getting myself a huge, big loving kingdom that I'm going to create for myself. And why I started saying this is if I, a girl from Kodagu, can do this then imagine you guys from Hyderabad what you're capable of. I think women are capable of doing anything they want in this world. And I hope one day all of you make your dreams come true.

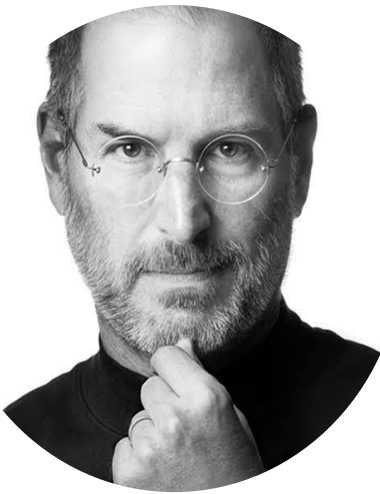
Please dream big. I'm sorry if the speech is too boring. But I just want to say, dream big, do not give a break, keep working hard, keep working hard. It's okay if someone is laughing at you. It's okay if someone is pulling your leg, pulling you back down, it's okay. You just keep working hard. You just keep looking up at the sky and reach your goals no matter what anyone else says. Because if you cannot protect yourself and dream for yourself, nobody else can.

Truly, trust me. I've been there. I've done that, and now I'm in the process of getting there, and I think I will get there pretty soon. I hope all of you join me and thank you so much for doing such a wonderful program like this and having me as a part of it. Means a lot, feel really, I'm truly grateful honestly. Thank you so much, and sorry if I have bored you. But I just wanted to say we are here to protect you, and I hope you reach your dreams you make your dreams come true.

Thank you.

Steve Jobs (founder of Apple, iPhone company)

Stay Hungry, Stay Foolish



I am honored to be with you today at for your commencement from one of the finest universities in the world. Truth be told, I never graduated from college. And this is the closest I've ever gotten to a college graduation.

Today I want to tell you three stories from my life. That's it. No big deal. Just three stories. The first story is about connecting the dots.

I dropped out of Reed College after the first 6 months, but then stayed around as a drop-in for another 18 months or so before I really quit. So why did I drop out?

It started before I was born. My biological mother was a young, unwed college graduate student, and she decided to put me up for adoption. She felt very strongly that I should be adopted by college graduates, so everything was all set for me to be adopted at birth by a lawyer and his wife. Except that when I popped out they decided at the last minute that they really wanted a girl. So my parents, who were on a waiting list, got a call in the middle of the night asking: "We have an unexpected baby boy; do you want him?" They said: "Of course." My biological mother later found out that my mother had never graduated from college and that my father had never graduated from high school. She refused to sign the final adoption papers. She only relented a few months later when my parents promised that I would go to college. This was the start in my life. And 17 years later I did go to college. But I naively chose a college that was almost as expensive as Stanford,

and all of my working-class parents' savings were being spent on my college tuition. After six months, I couldn't see the value in it. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out. And here I was spending all of the money my parents had saved their entire life. So I decided to drop out and trust that it would all work out OK. It was pretty scary at the time, but looking back it was one of the best decisions I ever made. The minute I dropped out I could stop taking the required classes that didn't interest me, and begin dropping in on the ones that looked far more interesting.

It wasn't all romantic. I didn't have a dorm room, so I slept on the floor in friends' rooms, I returned Coke bottles for the 5¢ deposits to buy food with, and I would walk the 7 miles across town every Sunday night to get one good meal a week at the Hare Krishna temple. I loved it. And much of what I stumbled into by following my curiosity and intuition turned out to be priceless later on. Let me give you one example: Reed College at that time offered perhaps the best calligraphy instruction in the country. Throughout the campus every poster, every label on every drawer, was beautifully hand calligraphed. Because I had

dropped out and didn't have to take the normal classes, I decided to take a calligraphy class to learn how to do this. I learned about serif and sans serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations, about what makes great typography great. It was beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can't capture, and I found it fascinating.

None of this had even a hope of any practical application in my life. But 10 years later, when we were designing the first Macintosh computer, it all came back to me. And we designed it all into the Mac. It was the first computer with beautiful typography. If I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts. And since Windows just copied the Mac, it's likely that no personal computer would have them. If I had never dropped out, I would have never dropped in on this calligraphy class, and personal computers might not have the wonderful typography that they do. Of course it was impossible to connect the dots looking forward when I was in college. But it was very, very clear looking backward 10 years later.

Again, you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backward. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something — your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. Because believing that the dots will connect down the road will give you the confidence to follow your heart even when it will lead you off the well-worn path. And that will make all the difference.

My second story is about love and loss.

I was lucky — I found what I loved to do early in life. Woz and I started Apple in my parents' garage when I was 20. We worked hard, and in 10 years Apple had grown from just the two of us in a garage into a \$2 billion company with over 4,000 employees. We had just released our finest creation — the Macintosh — a year earlier, and I had just turned 30. And then I got fired. How can you get fired from a company you started? Well, as Apple grew we hired someone who I thought was very talented to run the company with me, and for the first year or so things went well. But then our visions of the future began to diverge and eventually we had a falling out. When we did, our Board of Directors sided with him. So at 30 I was out. And very publicly out. What had been the focus of my entire adult life was gone, and it was devastating.

I really didn't know what to do for a few months. I felt that I had let the previous generation of entrepreneurs down — that I had dropped the baton as it was being passed to me. I met with David Packard and Bob Noyce and tried to apologize for screwing up so badly. I was a very public failure, and I even thought about running away from the valley. But something slowly began to dawn on me — I still loved what I did. The turn of events at Apple had not changed that one bit. I had been rejected, but I was still in love. And so I decided to start over.

I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.

During the next five years, I started a company named NeXT, another company named Pixar, and fell in love with an amazing woman who would become my wife. Pixar went on to create the world's first computer animated feature film, Toy Story, and is now the most successful animation studio in the world. In a remarkable turn of events, Apple bought NeXT, I returned to Apple, and the technology we developed at NeXT is at the heart of Apple's current renaissance. And Laurene and I have a wonderful family together. I'm pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith.

I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only

way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. And don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking. Don't settle.

My third story is about death.

When I was 17, I read a quote that went something like: "If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "No" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything — all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure — these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

About a year ago I was diagnosed with cancer. I had a scan at 7:30 in the morning, and it clearly showed a tumor on my pancreas. I didn't even know what a pancreas was. The doctors told me this was almost certainly a type of cancer that is incurable, and that I should expect to live no longer than three to six months. My doctor advised me to go home and get my affairs in order, which is doctor's code for prepare to die. It means to try to tell your kids everything you thought you'd have the next 10 years to tell them in just a few months. It means to make sure everything is buttoned up so that it will be as easy as possible for your family. It means to say your goodbyes.

I lived with that diagnosis all day. Later that evening I had a biopsy, where they stuck an endoscope down my throat, through my stomach and into my intestines, put a needle into my pancreas and got a few cells from the tumor. I was sedated, but my wife, who was there, told me that when they viewed the cells under a microscope the doctors started crying because it turned out to be a very rare form of pancreatic cancer that is curable with surgery. I had the surgery and thankfully, I'm fine now.

This was the closest I've been to facing death, and I hope it's the closest I get for a few more decades. Having lived through it, I can now say this to you with a bit more certainty than when death was a useful but purely intellectual concept:

No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma — which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary. When I was young, there was an amazing publication called *The Whole Earth Catalog*, which was one of the bibles of my generation. It was created by a fellow named Stewart Brand not far from here in Menlo Park, and he brought it to life with his poetic touch. This was in the late 1960s, before personal computers and desktop publishing, so it was all made with typewriters, scissors and Polaroid cameras.

It was sort of like Google in paperback form, 35 years before Google came along: It was idealistic, and overflowing with neat tools and great notions. Stewart and his team put out several issues of *The Whole Earth Catalog*, and then when it had run its course, they put out a final issue. It was the mid-1970s, and I was your age. On the back cover of their final issue was a photograph of an early morning country road,

the kind you might find yourself hitchhiking on if you were so adventurous. Beneath it were the words: "Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish." It was their farewell message as they signed off. Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish. And I have always wished that for myself. And now, as you graduate to begin anew, I wish that for you.

Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish.

Thank you all very much.



Barack Obama

Ignorance Is Not a Virtue

Point number one: When you hear someone longing for the “good old days,” take it with a grain of salt. Take it with a grain of salt. We live in a great nation and we are rightly proud of our history. We are beneficiaries of the labor and the grit and the courage of generations who came before. But I guess it’s part of human nature, especially in times of change and uncertainty, to want to look backwards and long for some imaginary past when everything worked, and the economy hummed, and all politicians were wise, and every child was well-mannered, and America pretty much did whatever it wanted around the world.

Guess what. It ain’t so. The “good old days” weren’t that good. Yes, there have been some stretches in our history where the economy grew much faster, or when government ran more smoothly. There were moments when, immediately after World War II, for example, or the end of the Cold War, when the world bent more easily to our will. But those are sporadic, those moments, those episodes. In fact, by almost every measure, America is better, and the world is better, than it was 50 years ago, or 30 years ago, or even eight years ago.

And by the way, I’m not — set aside 150 years ago, pre-Civil War — there’s a whole bunch of stuff there we could talk about. Set aside life in the ‘50s, when women and people of color were systematically excluded from big chunks of American life. Since I graduated, in 1983 — which isn’t that long ago — I’m just saying. Since I graduated, crime rates, teenage pregnancy, the share of Americans living in poverty — they’re all down. The share of Americans with college educations have gone way up. Our life expectancy has, as well. Blacks and Latinos have risen up the ranks in business and politics. More women are in the workforce. They’re earning more money — although it’s long past time that we passed laws to make sure that women are getting the same pay for the same work as men.

Meanwhile, in the eight years since most of you started high school, we’re also better off. You and your fellow graduates are entering the job market with better prospects than any time since 2007. Twenty million more Americans know the financial security of health insurance. We’re less dependent on foreign oil. We’ve doubled the production of clean energy. We have cut the high school dropout rate. We’ve cut the deficit by two-thirds. Marriage equality is the law of the land. And just as America is better, the world is better than when I graduated. Since I graduated, an Iron Curtain fell, apartheid ended. There’s more democracy. We virtually eliminated certain diseases like polio.

We’ve cut extreme poverty drastically. We’ve cut infant mortality by an enormous amount.

Now, I say all these things not to make you complacent. We’ve got a bunch of big problems to solve. But I say it to point out that change has been a constant in our history. And the reason America is better is

because we didn't look backwards we didn't fear the future. We seized the future and made it our own. And that's exactly why it's always been young people like you that have brought about big change — because you don't fear the future.

That leads me to my second point: The world is more interconnected than ever before, and it's becoming more connected every day. Building walls won't change that.

Look, as President, my first responsibility is always the security and prosperity of the United States. And as citizens, we all rightly put our country first. But if the past two decades have taught us anything, it's that the biggest challenges we face cannot be solved in isolation. When overseas states start falling apart, they become breeding grounds for terrorists and ideologies of nihilism and despair that ultimately can reach our shores. When developing countries don't have functioning health systems, epidemics like Zika or Ebola can spread and threaten Americans, too. And a wall won't stop that.

If we want to close loopholes that allow large corporations and wealthy individuals to avoid paying their fair share of taxes, we've got to have the cooperation of other countries in a global financial system to help enforce financial laws. The point is, to help ourselves we've got to help others — not pull up the drawbridge and try to keep the world out.

And engagement does not just mean deploying our military. There are times where we must take military action to protect ourselves and our allies, and we are in awe of and we are grateful for the men and women who make up the finest fighting force the world has ever known.

But I worry if we think that the entire burden of our engagement with the world is up to the 1 percent who serve in our military, and the rest of us can just sit back and do nothing. They can't shoulder the entire burden. And engagement means using all the levers of our national power, and rallying the world to take on our shared challenges.

You look at something like trade, for example. We live in an age of global supply chains, and cargo ships that crisscross oceans, and online commerce that can render borders obsolete. And a lot of folks have legitimate concerns with the way globalization has progressed — that's one of the changes that's been taking place — jobs shipped overseas, trade deals that sometimes put workers and businesses at a disadvantage. But the answer isn't to stop trading with other countries. In this global economy, that's not even possible. The answer is to do trade the right way, by negotiating with other countries so that they raise their labor standards and their environmental standards; and we make sure they don't impose unfair tariffs on American goods or steal American intellectual property. That's how we make sure that international rules are consistent with our values — including human rights. And ultimately, that's how we help raise wages here in America. That's how we help our workers compete on a level playing field. Building walls won't do that. It won't boost our economy, and it won't enhance our security either. Isolating or disparaging Muslims, suggesting that they should be treated differently when it comes to entering this country — that is not just a betrayal of our values — that's not just a betrayal of who we are, it would alienate the very communities at home and abroad who are our most important partners in the fight against violent extremism. Suggesting that we can build an endless wall along our borders, and blame our challenges on immigrants — that doesn't just run counter to our history as the world's melting pot; it contradicts the evidence that our growth and our innovation and our dynamism has always been spurred by our ability to attract strivers from every corner of the globe. That's how we became America. Why would we want to stop it now?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Four more years!

Can't do it.

Which brings me to my third point: Facts, evidence, reason, logic, an understanding of science — these are good things. These are qualities you want in people making policy. These are qualities you want to

continue to cultivate in yourselves as citizens. That might seem obvious. That's why we honor Bill Moyers or Dr. Burnell.

We traditionally have valued those things. But if you were listening to today's political debate, you might wonder where this strain of anti-intellectualism came from. So, Class of 2016, let me be as clear as I can be. In politics and in life, ignorance is not a virtue. It's not cool to not know what you're talking about. That's not keeping it real, or telling it like it is. That's not challenging political correctness. That's just not knowing what you're talking about. And yet, we've become confused about this.

Look, our nation's Founders — Franklin, Madison, Hamilton, Jefferson — they were born of the Enlightenment. They sought to escape superstition, and sectarianism, and tribalism, and no-nothingness. They believed in rational thought and experimentation, and the capacity of informed citizens to master our own fates. That is embedded in our constitutional design. That spirit informed our inventors and our explorers, the Edisons and the Wright Brothers, and the George Washington Carvers and the Grace Hoppers, and the Norman Borlaugs and the Steve Jobs. That's what built this country.

And today, in every phone in one of your pockets — we have access to more information than at any time in human history, at a touch of a button. But, ironically, the flood of information hasn't made us more discerning of the truth. In some ways, it's just made us more confident in our ignorance. We assume whatever is on the web must be true. We search for sites that just reinforce our own predispositions.

Opinions masquerade as facts. The wildest conspiracy theories are taken for gospel.

Now, understand, I am sure you've learned during your years of college — and if not, you will learn soon — that there are a whole lot of folks who are book smart and have no common sense. That's the truth.

You'll meet them if you haven't already. So the fact that they've got a fancy degree — you got to talk to them to see whether they know what they're talking about. Qualities like kindness and compassion, honesty, hard work — they often matter more than technical skills or know-how.

But when our leaders express a disdain for facts, when they're not held accountable for repeating falsehoods and just making stuff up, while actual experts are dismissed as elitists, then we've got a problem. You know, it's interesting that if we get sick, we actually want to make sure the doctors have gone to medical school, they know what they're talking about. If we get on a plane, we say we really want a pilot to be able to pilot the plane. And yet, in our public lives, we certainly think, "I don't want somebody who's done it before."

The rejection of facts, the rejection of reason and science — that is the path to decline. It calls to mind the words of Carl Sagan, who graduated high school here in New Jersey — he said: "We can judge our progress by the courage of our questions and the depths of our answers, our willingness to embrace what is true rather than what feels good."

The debate around climate change is a perfect example of this. Now, I recognize it doesn't feel like the planet is warmer right now. I understand. There was hail when I landed in Newark. But think about the climate change issue. Every day, there are officials in high office with responsibilities who mock the overwhelming consensus of the world's scientists that human activities and the release of carbon dioxide and methane and other substances are altering our climate in profound and dangerous ways.

A while back, you may have seen a United States senator trotted out a snowball during a floor speech in the middle of winter as "proof" that the world was not warming. I mean, listen, climate change is not something subject to political spin. There is evidence. There are facts. We can see it happening right now. If we don't act, if we don't follow through on the progress we made in Paris, the progress we've been making here at home, your generation will feel the brunt of this catastrophe.

So it's up to you to insist upon and shape an informed debate. Imagine if Benjamin Franklin had seen that senator with the snowball, what he would think. Imagine if your 5th grade science teacher had seen that. He'd get a D. And he's a senator!

Look, I'm not suggesting that cold analysis and hard data are ultimately more important in life than

passion, or faith, or love, or loyalty. I am suggesting that those highest expressions of our humanity can only flourish when our economy functions well, and proposed budgets add up, and our environment is protected. And to accomplish those things, to make collective decisions on behalf of a common good, we have to use our heads. We have to agree that facts and evidence matter. And we got to hold our leaders and ourselves accountable to know what the heck they're talking about.

All right. I only have two more points. I know it's getting cold and you guys have to graduate. Point four: Have faith in democracy. Look, I know it's not always pretty. Really, I know. I've been living it. But it's how, bit by bit, generation by generation, we have made progress in this nation. That's how we banned child labor. That's how we cleaned up our air and our water. That's how we passed programs like Social Security and Medicare that lifted millions of seniors out of poverty.

None of these changes happened overnight. They didn't happen because some charismatic leader got everybody suddenly to agree on everything. It didn't happen because some massive political revolution occurred. It actually happened over the course of years of advocacy, and organizing, and alliance-building, and deal-making, and the changing of public opinion. It happened because ordinary Americans who cared participated in the political process.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Because of you!

Well, that's nice. I mean, I helped, but —

Look, if you want to change this country for the better, you better start participating. I'll give you an example on a lot of people's minds right now — and that's the growing inequality in our economy. Over much of the last century, we've unleashed the strongest economic engine the world has ever seen, but over the past few decades, our economy has become more and more unequal. The top 10 percent of earners now take in half of all income in the U.S. In the past, it used to be a top CEO made 20 or 30 times the income of the average worker. Today, it's 300 times more. And wages aren't rising fast enough for millions of hardworking families.

Now, if we want to reverse those trends, there are a bunch of policies that would make a real difference. We can raise the minimum wage. We can modernize our infrastructure. We can invest in early childhood education. We can make college more affordable. We can close tax loopholes on hedge fund managers and take that money and give tax breaks to help families with child care or retirement. And if we did these things, then we'd help to restore the sense that hard work is rewarded and we could build an economy that truly works for everybody.

Now, the reason some of these things have not happened, even though the majority of people approve of them, is really simple. It's not because I wasn't proposing them. It wasn't because the facts and the evidence showed they wouldn't work. It was because a huge chunk of Americans, especially young people, do not vote.

In 2014, voter turnout was the lowest since World War II. Fewer than one in five young people showed up to vote — 2014. And the four who stayed home determined the course of this country just as much as the single one who voted. Because apathy has consequences. It determines who our Congress is. It determines what policies they prioritize. It even, for example, determines whether a really highly qualified Supreme Court nominee receives the courtesy of a hearing and a vote in the United States Senate.

And, yes, big money in politics is a huge problem. We've got to reduce its influence. Yes, special interests and lobbyists have disproportionate access to the corridors of power. But, contrary to what we hear sometimes from both the left as well as the right, the system isn't as rigged as you think, and it certainly is not as hopeless as you think. Politicians care about being elected, and they especially care about being reelected. And if you vote and you elect a majority that represents your views, you will get

what you want. And if you opt out, or stop paying attention, you won't. It's that simple. It's not that complicated.

Now, one of the reasons that people don't vote is because they don't see the changes they were looking for right away. Well, guess what — none of the great strides in our history happened right away. It took Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP decades to win *Brown vs. Board of Education*; and then another decade after that to secure the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. And it took more time after that for it to start working. It took a proud daughter of New Jersey, Alice Paul, years of organizing marches and hunger strikes and protests, and drafting hundreds of pieces of legislation, and writing letters and giving speeches, and working with congressional leaders before she and other suffragettes finally helped win women the right to vote.

Each stage along the way required compromise. Sometimes you took half a loaf. You forged allies. Sometimes you lost on an issue, and then you came back to fight another day. That's how democracy works. So you've got to be committed to participating not just if you get immediate gratification, but you got to be a citizen full-time, all the time.

And if participation means voting, and it means compromise, and organizing and advocacy, it also means listening to those who don't agree with you. I know a couple years ago, folks on this campus got upset that Condoleezza Rice was supposed to speak at a commencement. Now, I don't think it's a secret that I disagree with many of the foreign policies of Dr. Rice and the previous administration. But the notion that this community or the country would be better served by not hearing from a former Secretary of State, or shutting out what she had to say — I believe that's misguided. I don't think that's how democracy works best, when we're not even willing to listen to each other. I believe that's misguided.

If you disagree with somebody, bring them in — and ask them tough questions. Hold their feet to the fire. Make them defend their positions. If somebody has got a bad or offensive idea, prove it wrong. Engage it. Debate it. Stand up for what you believe in. Don't be scared to take somebody on. Don't feel like you got to shut your ears off because you're too fragile and somebody might offend your sensibilities. Go at them if they're not making any sense. Use your logic and reason and words. And by doing so, you'll strengthen your own position, and you'll hone your arguments. And maybe you'll learn something and realize you don't know everything. And you may have a new understanding not only about what your opponents believe but maybe what you believe. Either way, you win. And more importantly, our democracy wins. So, anyway, all right. That's it, Class of 2016 — a few suggestions on how you can change the world. Except maybe I've got one last suggestion. Just one. And that is, gear yourself for the long haul.

Whatever path you choose — business, nonprofits, government, education, health care, the arts — whatever it is, you're going to have some setbacks. You will deal occasionally with foolish people. You will be frustrated.

You'll have a boss that's not great. You won't always get everything you want — at least not as fast as you want it. So you have to stick with it. You have to be persistent. And success, however small, however incomplete, success is still success. I always tell my daughters, you know, better is good. It may not be perfect, it may not be great, but it's good. That's how progress happens — in societies and in our own lives.

So don't lose hope if sometimes you hit a roadblock. Don't lose hope in the face of naysayers. And certainly don't let resistance make you cynical. Cynicism is so easy, and cynics don't accomplish much. As a friend of mine who happens to be from New Jersey, a guy named Bruce Springsteen, once sang — “they spend their lives waiting for a moment that just don't come.” Don't let that be you. Don't waste your time waiting. If you doubt you can make a difference, look at the impact some of your fellow graduates are already

making. Look at what Matthew is doing. Look at somebody like Yasmin Ramadan, who began organizing anti-bullying assemblies when she was 10 years old to help kids handle bias and discrimination, and here

at Rutgers, helped found the Muslim Public Relations Council to work with administrators and police to promote inclusion.

Look at somebody like Madison Little, who grew up dealing with some health issues, and started wondering what his care would have been like if he lived someplace else, and so, here at Rutgers, he took charge of a student nonprofit and worked with folks in Australia and Cambodia and Uganda to address the AIDS epidemic. “Our generation has so much energy to adapt and impact the world,” he said. “My peers give me a lot of hope that we’ll overcome the obstacles we face in society.”

That’s you! Is it any wonder that I am optimistic? Throughout our history, a new generation of Americans has reached up and bent the arc of history in the direction of more freedom, and more opportunity, and more justice. And, Class of 2016, it is your turn now — to shape our nation’s destiny, as well as your own. So get to work. Make sure the next 250 years are better than the last.

Good luck. God bless you. God bless this country we love. Thank you

Ivanka Trump (Daughter of Donald Trump)



What Do We Stand For?

Before I begin, I want to send a message to everyone who has been affected by Hurricane Laura: Our hearts are with you. The president will continue to support you every step of the way. And just as Americans always do, the nation will come together to help you rebuild your homes, businesses and communities -- stronger, and more resilient than ever before.

Four years ago, I introduced you to a builder, an entrepreneur, an outsider and the people's nominee for president of the United States. Tonight, I stand before you as the proud daughter of the people's president. He is our commander-in-chief, champion of the American worker, defender of common sense and our voice for the forgotten men and women of this country. He is our president and my father, Donald J. Trump. This evening, I want to tell you about the leader I know, and the moments that I wish every American could see. I want to tell you the story of the president who is fighting for you from dawn to midnight, when the cameras have left, the microphones are off, and the decisions really count. When Jared and I moved with our three children to Washington, we didn't exactly know what we were in for. But our kids loved it from the start.

My son Joseph promptly built grandpa a Lego replica of the White House. The president still displays it on the mantel in the Oval Office and shows it to world leaders, just so they know he has the greatest grandchildren on earth. I agree. Over the last 4 years we've learned a lot. I've seen that in Washington, it's easy for politicians to survive if they silence their convictions and skip the hard fights. I couldn't believe that so many politicians actually prefer to complain about a problem, rather than fix it.

I was shocked to see people leave major challenges unsolved, so they can blame the other side and campaign on the same issue in the next election. But Donald Trump did not come to Washington to win praise from the beltway elites. Donald Trump came to Washington for one reason, and one reason alone: To Make America Great Again!

My father has strong convictions. He knows what he believes, and says what he thinks. Whether you agree with him or not, you always know where he stands. I recognize that my dad's communication style

is not to everyone's taste. And I know his tweets can feel a bit -- unfiltered. But the results speak for themselves. He is so unapologetic about his beliefs that he has caused me and countless Americans to take a hard look at our own convictions, and ask ourselves, what do we stand for?

What kind of America do we want to leave for our children?

I am more certain than ever before that we want a future where our kids can believe in American greatness. We want a society where every child can live in a safe community and go to a great school of their choice. We want a culture where differences of opinions and debate are encouraged, not canceled; where law enforcement is respected; where our country's rich diversity is celebrated; and where people of all backgrounds, races, genders and creeds have the chance to achieve their God-given potential. This is the future that my father is working to build each day. Building, after all, is what he is doing his whole life. He has admired and befriended construction workers on countless job sites. But it has been a new and profound experience for him, and for me, to see these stoic machinists and steelworkers come to him with tears in their eyes and thank him for being the only person willing to go to the mat for them -- for their jobs, for their families and for their futures. To the hardworking men and women across America, and here tonight, you are the reason my father fights with all his heart and all his might. You are the reason he ran for president in the first place. And you are the reason he's going to keep fighting for four more years. I remember one evening in early February of 2018.

We were in the Oval Office, with my father's top economic advisors, and the president was pushing to keep the promise he made to renegotiate the bad trade deals that had gutted millions of middle-class jobs. Most of his advisors argued that the economy was so strong following our historic tax and regulatory cuts, that it didn't make sense to risk "rocking the boat." After the meeting, as I walked with my father back to the Residence, he said, "You know, the reason this has never been done before is because our leaders haven't had the guts.

When the economy is good, they settle for good, and when things are bad, they don't have the will or ability, so they kick the can until it's someone else's problem." He was right. If my father didn't take on these fights, no one would. In the months that followed, President Trump refused to settle for a good deal, he wanted a great deal -- and ultimately, that's exactly what we got.

I remember each time he was updated on the progress of the new trade deal with Mexico and Canada, he would say "Don't let down those dairy farmers I met in Wisconsin. ... I don't want them to like this deal, I want them to love it!" Today, in the midst of an unprecedented global pandemic, it's more clear than ever that our president was absolutely correct to take on trade when he did -- and bring our jobs, factories, and life-saving medicines back to the USA.

As our nation endures this grave trial, I pray for the families who are mourning the loss of a loved one, for all those who are battling COVID-19, and for the first responders and healthcare heroes who remain on the frontlines of this fight.

The grief, sorrow, and anxiety during this time is felt by all.

I've been with my father and seen the pain in his eyes when he receives updates on the lives that have been stolen by this plague. I have witnessed him make some of the most difficult decisions of his life.

I sat with him in the Oval Office as he stopped travel to Europe.

I watched him take the strongest, most inclusive economy in our lifetime; the lowest unemployment in half a century, and the highest wage increase for working families in decades -- and close it down to save American lives.

This is why our President rapidly mobilized the full force of government and the private sector to produce ventilators within weeks -- to build the most robust testing system in the world -- and to develop safe and effective treatments, and very soon a vaccine.

My father isn't deterred by defeatist thinkers. The word "impossible" -- it only motivates him.

Donald Trump rejects the cynical notion that our greatest achievements are behind us -- he believes that nothing is beyond our reach, and the best is yet to come.

I've seen all my life, how my dad believes in the potential of each individual.

Earlier this evening, we were all inspired by the incredible testimony of Alice Johnson -- a great grandmother who was sentenced to life in prison for a first-time, non-violent drug offense.

I was with my father when he decided to commute Alice's life sentence.

Together, we watched Alice leave prison after nearly 22 years. As she ran into the arms of her family, and they celebrated a joyful reunion, my father was very quiet – I could see the emotion on his face.

After a long silence, he looked at me and said: "Imagine how many people there are just like Alice."

From that point on, he became a voice for those unfairly silenced in our prison system.

President Trump rectified the disparities in the 1994 Biden crime bill that disproportionately hurt African Americans.

Against all odds, he brought together Republicans and Democrats, and passed the most significant Criminal Justice Reform of our generation -- and we're just getting started.

My father did not campaign on this issue. He tackled this injustice because he has a deep compassion for those who have been treated unfairly.

More than rhetoric and political prose, the ability to build consensus and achieve bipartisan success will help heal our country's racial inequities and bring us forward -- together. President Trump is advancing the American values of work and family. Four years ago in Cleveland, I said that President Trump would deliver for working women. Last year, over 70% of all new jobs were secured by women. Four years ago, I told you my father would focus on making childcare affordable and accessible. In President Trump's first term, we secured the largest-ever increase for childcare funding, giving more than 800,000 low-income families great childcare at a cost they can afford. As part of Republican tax cuts, in 2019 alone, our child tax credit put over \$2,000 dollars into the pockets of 40 million American families. Democrat politicians recently introduced a plan to increase the child tax credit, yet when I was fighting less than three years ago, at the president's direction, to get Congress to double the child tax credit, not a single Democrat voted to pass the law -- we got it done anyway! Four years ago, I promised that President Trump would support mothers in the workforce. In his first year in office, he signed into law the first-ever National Paid Leave Tax Credit.

Today, 8 million more Americans have access to this benefit.

Four years ago, I said that Americans need an economy that permits people to rise again.

During President Trump's first three years in office, 72% of new jobs went to Americans who had been OUT of the work force. Four years ago, I told you I would fight alongside my father, and, four years later, here I am. Many of the issues my father has championed are not historically Republican priorities -- yet where Washington chooses sides, our president chooses common sense. Where politicians choose party, our president chooses people. Since the day he took the oath of office, I've watched my father take on the failed policies of the past and do what no other leader has done before. Recently, he took dramatically action to cut the cost of prescription drugs despite fielding angry calls from the CEOs of every major pharmaceutical company. Now, when we see an attack ad paid for by Big Pharma, my dad smiles and says to me, "You know we're doing something right when they're hitting us so hard."

This spring, our President saw that American crops were going to waste because food supply chains were disrupted by the virus. He directed Secretary Perdue and me to find a way to get this nutritious food -- fresh fruit, vegetables, meat and dairy -- to families most in need. Within a matter of days, we launched the Farmers to Families Food Box Program, which has now delivered over 100 million meals into the hands of American families.

To protect the most vulnerable among us, I've worked alongside the president as he signed into law nine pieces of legislation to combat the evil of human trafficking. 've stood by my father's side at Dover Air Force Base as he has received our fallen heroes, and each time it steeled his resolve to finally stop the endless foreign wars. To change the paradigm in the Middle East, he took a fresh approach.

I heard foreign leaders beg him not to move the American Embassy to Jerusalem, yet he delivered on the promise also made -- and unfulfilled -- by past presidents, because my father knew that it was the right thing to do.

Defying all expectations, just weeks ago, he re-wrote history by making a peace agreement in the Middle East -- the biggest breakthrough in a quarter century. For the first time in a long time, we have a president who has called out Washington's hypocrisy and they hate him for it. Dad, people attack you for being unconventional, but I love you for being real, and I respect you for being effective.

Our President refuses to surrender his beliefs to score points with the political elite.
To my father, you are the elite. You are the only people he cares about scoring points with.
If these problems were easy to solve, previous presidents would have done so. But you don't achieve different results by doing things the same way.
Washington has not changed Donald Trump. Donald Trump has changed Washington.
America doesn't need another empty vessel who will do whatever the media and the fringe of his party demands. Now more than ever, America needs four more years of a Warrior in the White House.



Shakira

Education Changes the World

Good morning Your Highness, excellences, friends, and colleagues. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to be here today. It's also an honor to join forces with Educated Child, an organization led by a woman who is an amazing role model — a woman who has shown such relentless dedication to getting every child in school. This is such an exciting day for us because it marks the beginning of a new era in my home country Colombia. Most of you may know me as an artist, as an entertainer, and that's indeed my calling and what I've been doing since I was 13 years old, but I never would have imagined when I started out that my work as an artist would end up being the vehicle for me to serve my greater purpose in life of working towards eradicating poverty through the power of Education.

As a Colombian citizen inequality as a concept that sadly one becomes very familiar with at a very young age. It's a country like many others in Latin America where a few have a lot; a lot have almost nothing and where if you're born poor, you will almost certainly die poor. Where people don't access equal opportunities, and because of that generation after generation, after generation live trapped in the same vicious cycle fed by prejudice and inaction.

Growing up in my country when I was around eight years old, I remember I saw kids my age who, instead of being in school were already working in the streets, were barefoot in the park. Kids like me whose reality was completely different than mine only because of the circumstances into which they were born. It was really hard for me to accept that to accept that something so unjust didn't have a solution.

There had to be something that could be done. So I often asked myself why the adults, around me were so resigned to the fact that these kids who were just like me or even their own children we're living in a parallel reality so different and so cruel. As Kofi Annan put it, poverty is intolerable in a world of plenty, so as soon as I had some success, the first thing I wanted to do was to invest as many resources I could into what later would become the most meaningful project of my life, working for children.

So I set out to find a team, a team of people who dream big and worked hard and thought like me to help me right the wrongs that I had witnessed throughout my entire childhood, and that's when our foundation The Barefoot Foundation, 'Pies Descalzos Fundacion' was born.

I knew, and I was only 18 years old then, but I knew that I wanted to focus on children and improving their lives, but I didn't know where to start. So, I really felt that I needed to learn what the roots of inequality and low social mobility were. So, I decided to study the reasons why children were working in the streets or why some children were being recruited by the violent organizations, like the paramilitary or the guerrillas, why were so many children suffering from chronic malnutrition and I realized that most of the issues that children face in my country had and have a common denominator; the lack of access to

quality education.

To me, it became crystal clear that Education was a surest way to give all these kids the best fighting chance of improving their circumstances in life because Education is the great equalizer. When I started building schools in Colombia, which shows the most remote areas, areas where there was literally nothing, no infrastructure, no paved roads, no electricity, no potable water, and we decided to build in those places but not only build schools but state-of-the-art schools. Schools with comprehensive models that included ECD programs, school feeding programs, parent and teacher training, and another very important part is we've decided to engage the government as a strategic partner and made it nearly impossible for them to say no to doing their part by showing them results through our holistic model that really proved to work.

We noticed that as soon as a school is built in those places, everything is transformed. The improvements to the infrastructure were jaw-dropping electricity, and potable water were made available, made accessible. Roads were paved, malnutrition plummeted, but the best part of all is the academic results, the kids really responded academically, and now those kids who could have been recruited by the guerrillas or paramilitaries or that could have had a completely different outcome for their lives, they're now on their way to the University and thriving in their communities. Some of them are athletes; some of them are professionals.

That's why... I'm so... It really is a thrill to work for Education that's why I'm so passionate about it because, I've really seen results that are as palpable as this podium and seeing all these success stories that have a name and a last name has been the one of the most rewarding things I've done in my lifetime even more so than winning Grammys, I think.

Now that said, our work is far from being done, many developing countries are still rife with inequality and internal conflict, and there are a lot of kids who still need to be reached.

History is not only the past. History it's made every day in the present, and what matters now is how we go forward and how we'll fix what's wrong, and that is the real challenge. This is the goal of the SDGs and what people like Her Highness and myself, and so many more of you who are adamant about achieving are here for.

Facts don't lie, and numbers show what an incredible return on investment a quality education provides. For instance, if all students in low-income countries left primary school with basic reading skills, a hundred and seventy-one million people could be lifted out of poverty. Systemic change often begins from the bottom up rather than the top down. The government must take responsibility, and we should all put as much pressure as we possibly can, but the rest of all the civil society should also do their part. What we have discovered both here IPS discuss and educated child is that many times only one single barrier to entry, such as no access to transportation or basic needs like a functioning bathroom, can prevent a kid from attending school or even put them at risk of dropping out. Sometimes all it takes to change a child's life is the security of a hot meal in school or the ease of being able to hop on a bus that will leave you safely at your classroom door, it's as simple as that, and these are simple interventions, and they don't cost a lot. The biggest effort really is in mapping the communities; in going door-to-door searching for the out of school children talking to the parents talking to their families, giving a name and putting a story behind these children is the first step to start rewriting their story.

Over the next three years, we pledge to get fifty-four thousand kids who are out of school or at risk of drop out into the educational system. Ultimately, more than two hundred ninety-five thousand people will benefit from this project, including children, teachers, families, and community members. New schools and classrooms will be built, school kits and uniforms will be distributed; children will be enrolled in school, feeding, and transportation programs. Teachers will be trained in strategies and how to identify those students who are at risk so they can receive psycho-social support, and we are extremely confident that this partnership is only the beginning and will be the model to replicate throughout my country until

not a single child is out of school. This is our responsibility...Thank you...This is our responsibility to our children and our debt to fulfill for the generations to come.
Thank you very much.



Jack Ma (The Founder of Alibaba Group of Companies)

Never Give up

Charlie: We've all become very cognizant of Jack and his story. And when Alibaba went public with the largest IPO in history, we knew a lot more about him. So, I want to talk about his personal story. I want to talk about how many times he tried and failed and what kept him going. I want to talk about where he is today and how he got here. I'll begin with this question though, Jack. Why are you back at Davos?

Jack: It's been a long break, for seven years. I think my last trip here was in year 2008. But I was coming for the year 2001 for the Young Global Leader for Tomorrow. And I think, I remember, I never heard about Davos when I came. But when I came into Switzerland, so many young people demonstrated. It was such a horrible scene and I asked them "What are they doing?" They said, "Anti-globalization." And I said "Why? Globalization is a great thing. Why people don't like it?" And then we came all the way for two hours here. There's a machine gun, there's a people checking us. Oh, God, is it a film or is a prison? What is that? But when I joined the Forum at the Young Global Leader, I was thrilled by so many ideas. For the first three to four years, I learned what does globalization mean? What does cooperative citizenship mean? What does social responsibility mean? All these new ideas and I saw so many great leaders talking about leadership, and I benefited a lot. In the year 2008 and nine when the financial crisis came, I thought it's better to go back to work. Because we can never win the world by talking. So, go back, spend seven years. Now, I came back. I think it's time to do something in return because I learned so much 12 years ago, so why should I not be talking to the young global leader of today, sharing with them how we've gone through. So, that was the thing.

Charlie: Let's start with where you are today. Just how big is Alibaba? How many people come every day?

How many people come in a week? How fast is it growing?

Jack: Yeah. We have over 100 million buyers visiting our site, shop on our site every day, and we created...

Charlie: A hundred million every day?

Jack: We created 14 million jobs for China directly and indirectly. And we grew from 18 people to 30,000;

18 people in my apartment to now we have four big campers. Compared to 15 years ago, we were big, but compared to 15 years later, we're still a baby.

Charlie: How big will you be, 15 years from now?

Jack: I think 15 years ago I told my team that 15 years-- in the past 15 years, we grew from nothing to this size. And 15 years later I want people to see and know about Alibaba, because it's already everywhere. I want, 15 years ago when we talked about what is e-commerce, why small businesses can use this e-commerce, use the internet, can do business across the nation. And I hope 15 years later, people forget about e-commerce because we think it's like electricity. Nobody thinks it is a high tech today. This is something that I don't want 15 years later, we still walk on the street talking about why and how e-commerce can help people.

Charlie: You tried to get into three colleges, each time they rejected.

Jack: No, I tried. There is an examination that young people if you want to go university you have to take the examinations. So, I failed three times, but I failed at a lot of things. I failed for funny things, I failed a key primary school test for two times, and I failed three times for the middle school, middle schools. And you will never believe in Hangzhou, my city. There's only one middle school that lasts only one year. It was changed from primary school to middle school because our graduates of our school, no middle school accept us because we're too bad. It would become a middle school.

Charlie: What effect did it have though, being rejected?

Jack: Well, I think we have to get used to it. We're not that good. Even today, we still have a lot of people reject us. I think when I graduate from universities, and before, you know, for three years I tried and failed to get into universities. So, I applied to jobs for 30 times, got rejected. I went for police, they say no, you're not good. I went to you know, even the KFC, when KFC came to China, came to my city, 24 people went for the job, 23 people were accepted. I was the only guy. And we went for police, five people, four of them accepted. I was the only guy that never received it. So, to me, being turned down, rejected... Oh, by the way, I told you that when I applied for Harvard, 10 times rejected. I know I would be rejected...

Charlie: They're sorry now. Ten times, you wrote them and said, "I'd like to come to Harvard."

Jack: Yeah. And then I told myself someday I should go teach there, one day.

Charlie: I think that can be arranged. Richard Nixon came to Hangzhou and after that, tourists flooded the place, and that's how you learned English.

Jack: Yeah. I really liked the-- I don't know why at 12, 13 years old, at that time I suddenly fell in love with the language, English. And there is no place you can learn English at that time. There's no books, English books. So, I went to the Hangzhou hotel now called Hangzhou Shangri-La Hotel because that was the hotel that received the foreign visitors. So, every morning, for nine years, I showed them around as a free guide and they taught me English. And I think that changed me. Today, I'm 100% made in China. I've never got one day's training outside of China. And when people talk to me and say, "Jack, how can you speak English like that? Why do you sometimes talk like the western guys?" I think that was the nine years these western tourists opened my mind. Because everything they told me was so different from the things I learned from the schools and from my parents. So, now I have a habit. Whatever I see, whatever read I use my mind, think about doing business.

Charlie: Is that how Ma Yun became Jack Ma?

Jack: Actually, Jack, the name was given by a lady in tennis. She's a tourist, she came here and she said-- came to Hangzhou, we had a-- we became penfriends, Ma Yun is so difficult to pronounce. So, she said, "Do you have an English name?" I said, "No.", "Can you give me an English name?" She said, "Okay."

She said, “My father’s called Jack, my husband’s called Jack, what do you think about Jack?” I said, “Good.” So, I’ve been using that for many years.

Charlie: First visit to America 1995?

Jack: 1995. Yeah, I came here for a project helping the local government to build up a highway.

Charlie: And you tried the internet.

Jack: I tried the internet in Seattle and in a building called the U.S. Bank. I don't know whether U.S. Bank's still there, or not but it's a building. And my friend opened a small office which is like, only 10% bigger than this room and they're a lot of computers in there. And he said, “Jack, this is internet.” I asked, “What is internet?” He said, “Search whatever you want.” At that time, they used Mosaic, very slow. And I said, “I don't use it. I don't want to type” because computers so expensive in China. If I destroy it, I cannot pay. He said, “Just search it.” So, I searched the first word, beer. I don't know why, because it's easy to spell. And I see beers from Germany, beers from the USA, beers from Japan, but there's no beer from China. And I say, okay, typed the second word, China. No data. Nothing.

Charlie: Nothing. 1995.

Jack: 1995, no data about China. So, I talked to my friend, “Why don't I make some something about China?” So, we made a small, very ugly looking page called China. It's about it's something like I did a translation agency and we're listed on there. It was so shocking. We launched at 9:40 in the morning. 12:30, I got a phone call for my friend who said, “Jack, you know, you got five emails.” I said, “What is email?” And he said, “These are the things...” He said people are so excited. Where are you? This is the first time I see a Chinese website on that. How can we... When can we do something together?” So, I think this is something interesting, so we should do it.

Charlie: Why did you call it Alibaba?

Jack: Alibaba? Well, when I started, I think internet is global. We should have a global name and a name that is interesting. Like at that time, the best name was Yahoo. So, I'd been thinking for many days and suddenly, Alibaba is a good name. So, I happened to be in San Francisco that day, and I had lunch and the waitress came. I asked her, “Do you know about Alibaba?” She said, “Yes.” I said, “What is Alibaba?” She said, “Open sesame.” Good. So, I ran down the street and asked 10, 20 people, they all know about Alibaba and the Forty Thieves, and open sesame. And I think “This is a good name and it started with A.” Whatever you talk about, Alibaba's always on top.

Charlie: You have said before that in creating Alibaba, you had to create trust because people in China were used to face-to-face. How did you create trust?

Jack: I think because we started out doing business on the internet, I don't know you, you don't know me. So, how can you do things online unless you have trust? So, for e-commerce, the most important thing was trust. I think when I first went to the US for raising money, talk to the venture capitalists, a lot of people say “Oh, Jack, no, no, no, no, no. China doing business via guanxi. How can you do business on the internet?” And I know that without the trust of the system, the credit system, it's impossible to do business. So, we, in the past 14 years, everything we do is trying to build up the trust system, the record

system. Well, Charlie, you know, I'm so proud today. Today, in China and in the world, people don't trust each other. The government, and people, and media, and everybody thinks, "Oh, this guy's cheating." But because of e-commerce, we've finished 60 million transactions every day. People don't know each other. I don't know you. I send products to you. You don't know me. You wire the money to me. And I don't know you, I give a person a package. I don't know him. He took something to sell across the ocean, across the river and this is the trust. We have at least this 60-million trust happening every day.

Charlie: But you created it by creating an escrow account in the beginning. You know, and so you'd keep the money until they got the product, and then you release the money.

Jack: Yep. That's true. I mean, the escrow service is about Alipay. When I, you know, this idea would love Davos because it was a big decision. Because for the three years Alibaba is just like e-marketplaces for information. What do you have? What do I have? We talked a lot of times but don't do any business because there was no payment. I talked to the banks, no banks wanted to do it. Banks said, "No, this thing would never work." So, I don't know what to do. Because if I start to launch a payment system, it's against the financial legal laws, because you have to have a license, but if I don't do it, e-commerce would go nowhere. So, then I went to Davos, I listened to a leadership discussion. Leadership is about responsibility. And after I listen to that panel, I gave a call to my friends. My colleagues in the apartment say, "Do it now, immediately." If something's wrong, the government's not happy about that, if one body has to go to the prison, Jack Ma go to the prison. Because it is so important for China for the world to be able to trust system. And if you do not do it, I said I do not do it properly; stealing money, money wash, no trust record, I send you to the prison. So, I always say things... And people don't like it. So, many people I talked to at that time for Alipay, they said, "This is the stupidest idea you have ever got." But I said, "I don't need the stupid or clever as long as people use it." Now, we have 800-million people using this Alipay. Stupid things everybody is better.

Charlie: Alipay is a privately held thing. It's not part of Alibaba?

Jack: No, it's a private...

Charlie: Let me talk about money for a second. You have never gotten money from the Chinese government?

Jack: No.

Charlie: None?

Jack: I wanted in the beginning. Later, I don't want it because I think if the company always thinks about picking money from out of the government's pockets, that company is rubbish. Think about it. How can you make money from the customers and market and then help customers succeed. That's our philosophy.

Charlie: No money from Chinese Banks?

Jack: No. At that time, I wanted and now, they want to give me, I don't want it.

Charlie: Your relationship with the government, yeah, what's your relationship? I mean, if they didn't... Here's what some say that you have existed in an environment that's not-- they have restricted competition for you. And that's a pretty good thing to do for a private company.

Jack: Yeah. I think the relationship with the government for us is very interesting for the first five years. Because I've been working at a part-time job for a government organization called Ministry of Foreign Trade, 1997 for 14 months. And I learned that you should never rely on government organization to do ecommerce. And I started the business. I told my people and team, "In love with the government but don't marry them." Respect them. And a lot of people say, "Well, you know, government officers talking about Internet censorship and this, that and the worry about..." I think it's the opportunity, it's a responsibility, talking to them. Tell them how the internet can help.

Charlie: So, you tell them we create jobs.

Jack: Oh, yeah. I think a lot of people debate and fight against them. And in the first 12 years, anybody comes to my office, I sit down, talking to them, how we can help the economy, how we can create jobs, why China will improve by the internet. I think, because the internet at that time was new to any government. And if you convince somebody and you have the chance, so today I'm very talkative. Probably this is why I talk to so many people.

Charlie: You're also seen in Hollywood.

Jack: Yeah.

Charlie: What are you doing in Hollywood?

Jack: Well, I like the Hollywood innovation. The digital... I learned so much about the Hollywood movies, especially the Forrest Gump.

Charlie: You love Forrest Gump.

Jack: I love Forrest Gump.

Charlie: Why do you like him?

Jack: Simple. Never give up. People thinking he's dumb, but he knows what he's doing. And I was very depressed the day in the year 2002 or three in the States when I... No, no, no, no. Earlier than that. I was very depressed when I could not find out a way for the internet. And then I watched the movie in my friend's home, Forrest Gump. When I saw him I said, "This is the guy we should learn from." Believe what you're doing. Love it. Whether people like it, don't like it, be simple. And like the word, life is like a box of chocolate. You never know what you're gonna get. Right? I never know I would be here talking to you and talking to Charlie Rose. I never knew. But today I made it. I told my people in my apartment 15 years ago; "Guys, we have to work hard, not for ourselves." If we can be successful 80% of the young people in China can be successful. We don't have a rich father, powerful uncle, we don't have \$1 from Bank, incentive from government, just work as a team.

Charlie: So, what do you worry about?

Jack: I worry about today, young people. A lot of young people lose hope, lose vision, and start to complain. Because we also have the same period because when I got-- It's not a good feeling being rejected by so many people. We're also depressed but at least later we find that the world has a lot of opportunities; how you see the world, how you catch the opportunity. And Hollywood gave me a lot of inspiration, you know...

Charlie: You're basically out there for business. You out there because you want to make movies and sell them.

Jack: I want to make the movie for business-wise, we are an e-commerce company, we have a lot of products that need logistics, but movie, TV, these are things you don't need a logistic system. And movies are probably is the best product that can help Chinese young people to understand, because one thing I told the Chinese people, my friends; in American movies, all the heroes at the beginning they look like a bad guy, but when terrible things come, they become a hero. And finally, they all survived. China, if you're a hero, all the heroes died. Because only dead people become a hero, so nobody wants to be the hero.

Charlie: So, you want to change the Chinese definition of a hero?

Jack: Yeah, I want to say hero, today we have so many heroes living in this world.

Charlie: China today, are you worried the economy's slowed down?

Jack: No, I don't worry about it. I think China's doing, it's slowing down is much better than keeping at 9%. China today, is the second largest economy in the world. It's impossible to keep 9% of the growth. If China's to keep the 9% of the growth of the economy, there must be something wrong, you will never see the blue sky. You will never see the quality. China should pay attention to the quality of the economy. China should not... So, if we have a lot of influence, you know, like Hollywood movies things, and we have sports and these things in the GDP, we'd be much better. So, I think just like a human grow, you can never-- this body cannot grow, grow, grow, grow. Certain times, the slow growth of a body is slow, but it should grow your mind, grow your culture, grow your values, grow your wisdom. I think China is moving in that direction.

Charlie: And you saw Modi in India?

Jack: Pardon?

Charlie: Did you see Modi in India?

Jack: Not yet. I'm looking forward to that.

Charlie: Oh, you'll go to India. Finally there's this; you're one of the world's richest people. Your company is one of the world's richest companies. What do you want beyond Alibaba?

Jack: Well, by richest people, I was really not happy. In the past three months when people say Jack Ma is the richest people of China.

Charlie: Global celebrity, they said.

Jack: No, I'm not. When I start a business 15...

Charlie: You are. You are.

Jack: I never thought-- Yeah, maybe I am now. But I think what I-- 15 years ago, my partner, my wife was at that time one of the 18 founders. I asked her, "Do you want your husband to be a rich person?" I never said rich person in China, rich person in Hangzhou. "Or, do you want your husband to be a respected person?" She said, "Of course respected." Because she'd never believed and I don't believe we'd be rich people. We just want to survive. I believe we have \$1 million, that's your money. When you have \$20 million, you still have problems. You worry about inflation, which stock to buy, and this, that and headache come. When you have \$1 billion, that's not your money. That's the trust society's given you. They believe you can manage the money, use the money better than the government and the others. So, I think today, I have the resources, do more things. With the money we have, with the influence we have, we should spend more time on the young people. And I would say someday I'll go back to teach. Go back to school, spend time with the young people and telling and sharing with them what I've done. So, the money's not mine. I just carry it happily and having these resources, then I want to do a better job.

Charlie: Just tell them your story.

Jack: Yeah, tell them the story. And tell them that if, Jack-- I don't think in this world, a lot of people have been rejected more than 30 times. The only thing, we should never give up. The only thing, we're like a Forrest Gump. We keep on fighting. We keep on changing ourselves. We don't complain. Whether you are successful or not successful, I find that when people, when they finish the job, if they made a mistake or they failed if they always complain to others. This guy will never come back. If the guy only

checks himself, yeah, something's wrong with me here, something's wrong with me there; this guy has hope.

Charlie: Jack, on behalf of everybody in this audience and our television audience around the world, thank you for taking your time to be with us.

Jack: Thank you.

Wentworth Miller (The Main Hero of the Drama of “Prison Break.”)

Survival Mode



I’ve had a complicated relationship with that word, ‘community.’ I’ve been slow to embrace it. I’ve been hesitant. I’ve been doubtful. For many years I could not or would not accept that there was anything in that word for someone like me. Like connection and support, strength, warmth. And there are reasons for that. I wasn’t born in this country. I didn’t grow up in any one particular religion. I have a mixed-race background, and I’m gay. Really, it’s just your typical all-American boy next door. It has been natural to see myself as an individual. It’s been a challenge to imagine that self as part of something larger. Like many of you here tonight, I grew up in what I would call survival mode.

When you’re in survival mode, your focus is on getting through the day in one piece, and when you’re in that mode at 5, at 10, at 15, there isn’t a lot of space for words like ‘community,’ for words like ‘us’ and ‘we.’ There’s only space for ‘I’ and ‘me.’ In fact, words like ‘us’ and ‘we’ not only sounded foreign to me at 5 and 10 and 15, they sounded like a lie. Because if ‘us’ and ‘we’ really existed, if there was really someone out there watching and listening and caring, then I would have been rescued by now.

That feeling of being singular and different and alone carried over into my 20s and into my 30s. When I was 33, I started working on a TV show that was successful not only here in the States, but also abroad, which meant over the next 4 years, I was traveling to Asia, to the Middle East, to Europe, and everywhere in between, and in that time, I gave thousands of interviews. I had multiple opportunities to speak my truth, which is that I was gay, but I chose not to. I was out privately to family and friends, to the people I’d learned to trust over time, but professionally, publicly I was not. Asked to choose between being out of

integrity and out of the closet, I chose the former. I chose to lie, I chose to dissemble, because when I thought about the possibility of coming out, about how that might impact me and the career I’d worked so hard for, I was filled with fear. Fear and anger and a stubborn resistance that had built up over many years. When I thought about that kid somewhere out there who might be inspired or moved by me taking a stand and speaking my truth, my mental response was consistently, ‘No, thank you.’ I thought, I’ve spent over a decade building this career, alone, by myself, and from a certain point of view, it’s all I have. But now I’m supposed to put that at risk to be a role model, to someone I’ve never met, who I’m not even sure exists. That didn’t make any sense to me. That did not resonate... at the time. Also, like many of you here tonight, growing up I was a target. Speaking the right way, standing the right way, holding your wrist the right way. Every day was a test and there were a thousand ways to fail. A

thousand ways to betray yourself. To not live up to someone else's standard of what was acceptable, of what was normal. And when you failed the test, which was guaranteed, there was a price to pay. Emotional. Psychological. Physical. And like many of you, I paid that price, more than once, in a variety of ways. The first time that I tried to kill myself, I was 15. I waited until my family went away for the weekend and I was alone in the house and I swallowed a bottle of pills. I don't remember what happened over the next couple of days, but I'm pretty sure come Monday morning I was on the bus back to school, pretending everything was fine. And when someone asked me if that was a cry for help, I say no, because I told no one. You only cry for help if you believe there's help to cry for. And I didn't. I wanted out. I wanted gone. At 15.

'I am me' can be a lonely place, and it will only get you so far. By 2011, I'd made the decision to walk away from acting and many of the things I'd previously believed so important to me. And after I'd given up the scripts and the sets which I'd dreamed of as a child, and the resulting attention and scrutiny which I had not dreamed of as a child, the only thing I was left with was what I had when I started. 'I am me,' and it was not enough.

In 2012, I joined a men's group called The Mankind Project, which is a men's group for all men, and was introduced to the still foreign and still potentially threatening concepts of 'us' and 'we,' to the idea of brotherhood, sisterhood and community. And it was via that community that I became a member and proud supporter of the Human Rights Campaign, and it was via this community that I learned more about the persecution of my LGBT brothers and sisters in Russia.

Several weeks ago, when I was drafting my letter to the St. Petersburg International Film Festival, declining their invitation to attend, a small nagging voice in my head insisted that no one would notice. That no one was watching or listening or caring. But this time, finally, I knew that voice was wrong. I thought if even one person notices this letter in which I speak my truth, and integrate my small story into a much larger and more important one, is worth sending. I thought, let me be to someone else what no one was to me. Let me send a message to that kid, maybe in America, maybe someplace far overseas, maybe somewhere deep inside, a kid who's being targeted at home or at school or in the streets, that someone is watching and listening and caring. That there is an 'us,' that there is a 'we,' and that kid or teenager or adult is loved, and they are not alone.

I am deeply grateful to the Human Rights Campaign for giving me and others like me the opportunity and the platform and the imperative to tell my story, to continue sending that message, because it needs to be sent, over and over again, until it's been heard and received and embraced. Not just here in Washington State, not just across the country, but around the world, and then back again. Just in case. Just in case we miss someone.

Thank you



JOE BIDEN (Current President of America)

Victory Speech

Hello, my fellow Americans and the people who brought me to dance, Delawareans. I see my buddy Senator Tom Carper down there and I think Senator Coons is there and I think the governor's around. Is that Ruth Ann? Yes, it is! And now former governor Ruth Ann Minner. Most importantly, my sisters-in-law and my sister Valerie. Anyway, folks, the people of this nation have spoken. They've delivered us a clear victory, a convincing victory, a victory for we the people. We've won with the most votes ever cast for a presidential ticket in the history of the nation, 74 million.

Well, I must admit it surprised me. Tonight, we've seen all over this nation, all cities in all parts of the country, indeed across the world, an outpouring of joy, of hope, renewed faith, and tomorrow bring a better day. I'm humbled by the trust and confidence you've placed in me.

I pledge to be a president who seeks not to divide but unify, who doesn't see red states and blue states, only sees the United States, and work with all my heart, with the confidence of the whole people, to win the confidence of all of you. For that is what America, I believe, is about. It's about people. And that's what our administration will be all about.

I sought this office to restore the soul of America, to rebuild the backbone of this nation, the middle class, and to make America respected around the world again and to unite us here at home. It's the honor of my lifetime that so many millions of Americans have voted for that vision. Now the work of making that vision is real. It's a task, the task, of our time.

Folks, as I said many times before, I'm Jill's husband, and I would not be here without her love and tireless support of Jill, and my son Hunter and Ashley, my daughter, and all our grandchildren and their spouses and all our family. They're in my heart.

Jill's a mom, a military mom, an educator. She's dedicated her life to education. But teaching isn't just what she does. It's who she is. For American educators, this is a great day for you all. You're going to have one of your own in the White House. Jill's going to make a great First Lady. I'm so proud of her. I'll have the honor of serving with a fantastic vice president. You just heard from Kamala Harris, who makes history as the first woman, first Black woman, the first woman from South Asian descent, the first daughter of immigrants ever elected in this country.

Don't tell me it's not possible in the United States. It's long overdue. We're reminded tonight of those who fought so hard for so many years to make this happen. But once again, America's bent the arc of the moral universe, more toward justice. Kamala, Doug, like it or not, you're family. You've become an honorary Biden. There's no way out.

To all those of you who volunteered and worked the polls in the middle of this pandemic, local elected officials, you deserve a special thanks from the entire nation. To my campaign team and all the volunteers, and all who gave so much of themselves to make this moment possible, I owe you. I owe you.

I owe you everything. All those who supported us, I'm proud of the campaign we built and ran. I'm proud of the coalition we put together, the broadest and most diverse coalition in history. Democrats, Republicans, independents, progressives, moderates, conservatives, young, old, urban, suburban, rural, gay, straight, transgender, white, Latino, Asian, Native American. I mean it, especially in those moments and especially for those moments when this campaign was at its lowest ebb, the African American community stood up again for me. You've always had my back, and I'll have yours. I said at the outset I wanted this campaign to represent and look like America. We've done that. Now that's what I want the administration to look like and act like.

For all those of you who voted for President Trump, I understand the disappointment tonight. I've lost a couple of times myself. But now let's give each other a chance. It's time to put away the harsh rhetoric, lower the temperature, see each other again, listen to each other again. To make progress, we have to stop treating our opponents as our enemies. They are not our enemies. They're Americans. They're Americans.

The Bible tells us to everything, there's a season, a time to build, a time to reap and a time to sow, and a time to heal. This is the time to heal in America. Now this campaign is over, what is the will of people? What is our mandate? I believe it's this: American have called upon us to marshal the forces of decency, the forces of fairness, to marshal the forces of science and the forces of hope in the great battles of our time, the battle to control the virus, the battle to build prosperity, the battle to secure your family's healthcare, the battle to achieve racial justice and root out systemic racism in this country.

And the battle to save our planet by getting climate under control. The battle to restore decency, defend democracy, and give everybody in this country a fair shot. That's all they're asking for: a fair shot.

Folks, our work begins with getting COVID under control. We cannot repair the economy, restore our vitality, or relish life's most precious moments, hugging our grandchildren, our children on our birthdays, weddings, graduations, all the moments that matter most to us until we get it under control.

On Monday, I will name a group of leading scientists and experts as transition advisors, to help take the Biden-Harris COVID plan and convert it into an action blueprint that will start on January the 20th, 2021. That plan will be built on bedrock science. It will be constructed out of compassion, empathy, and concern. I will spare no effort, none, or any commitment to turn around this pandemic.

Folks, I'm a proud Democrat, but I will govern as an American president. I'll work as hard for those who didn't vote for me as those who did. Let this grim era of demonization in America begin to end here and now. The refusal of Democrats and Republicans to cooperate with one another is not some mysterious force beyond our control, it's a decision, a choice we make. If we can decide not to cooperate, then we can decide to cooperate. I believe that this is part of the mandate given to us from the American people. They want us to cooperate in their interests, and that's the choice I'll make. I'll call on Congress, Democrats and Republicans alike, to make that choice with me. The American story is about slow yet steadily widening the opportunities in America. Make no mistake, too many dreams have been deferred for too long. We must make the promise of the country real for everybody, no matter their race, their ethnicity, their faith, their identity, or their disability. Folks, America has always been shaped by inflection points by moments in time where we've made hard decisions about who we are and what we want to be: Lincoln in 1860 coming to save the union, FDR in 1932 promising a beleaguered country a new deal, JFK in 1960 pledging a new frontier, and 12 years ago when Barack Obama made history and told us, yes, we can.

Well, folks, we stand at an inflection point. We have an opportunity to defeat despair, to build a nation of prosperity and purpose. We can do it. I know we can.

I've long talked about the battle for the soul of America. We must restore the soul of America. Our nation is shaped by the constant battle between our better angels and our darkest impulses, and what

presidents say in this battle matters. It's time for our better angels to prevail.

Tonight, the whole world is watching America, and I believe, at our best, America is a beacon for the globe. We will lead not only by the example of our power, but by the power of our example.

I know I've always believed, and many of you heard me say it, I've always believed we can define America in one word: possibilities. That in America everyone should be given an opportunity to go as far as their dreams and God-given ability will take them.

You see, I believe in the possibilities of this country. We're always looking ahead, ahead to an America that's freer and more just, ahead to an America that creates jobs with dignity and respect, ahead to an America that cures diseases like cancer and Alzheimer's, ahead to an America that never leaves anyone behind, ahead to an America that never gives up, never gives in.

This is a great nation. It's always been a bad bet to bet against America. We're good people. This is the United States of America. There's never been anything, never been anything, we've been not able to do when we've done it together.

Folks, in the last days of the campaign, I began thinking about a hymn that means a lot to me and my family, particularly my deceased son, Beau. It captures the faith that sustains me and which I believe sustains America. I hope, and I hope, we can provide some comfort and solace to the 230,000 Americans who've lost a loved one due to this terrible virus this year. My heart goes out to each and every one of you. Hopefully this hymn gives you solace as well.

It goes like this. "And he will raise you up on eagle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, and make you just shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of His hand." Now together on eagle's wings, we embark on the work that God and history have called upon us to do. With full hearts and steady hands, with faith in America and in each other, with love of country, a thirst for justice, let us be the nation that we know we can be, a nation united, a nation strengthened, a nation healed, the United States of America. Ladies and gentlemen, there's never, never, been anything we've tried we've not been able to do.

Remember, as my grandpappy said when I walked out of his home, when I was a kid up in Scranton, he said, "Joey, keep the faith." And our grandmother, when she was alive, she yelled, "No, Joey. Spread it." Spread the faith. God love you all. May God bless America and may God protect our troops. Thank you, thank you, thank you.



MS Dhoni (Cricketer of India)

Be Honest and Take Risks

(Crowd Cheering) Dhoni, Dhoni, Dhoni!

Anchor: Okay, we are also having Mr. Dhoni here on stage for the theatrical trailer launch along with Mr. Rajamouli sir. It's indeed a great pleasure and privilege to see both of you altogether here for MS Dhoni, the Untold Story. And with our fans permission and Dhoni sir's permission, can we ask you a few questions, please. What do you love about Hyderabad?

MS Dhoni: There are a lot of things that I love about Hyderabad. But before I say anything, thanks for coming here. It's a real pleasure sharing the stage with you. We are big fans of your work. So, thanks for coming. The moment you talk about Hyderabad, you know, biryani is the first thing that people talk about. And, when I started playing cricket, when I was playing first class cricket, I think it was 2000 and we had a game over here. So, that was my first introduction to the Hyderabad biryani. And after that, whenever we have come here, biryani is something that's, we can't really miss. Of course, we come here for cricket, but Biryani is something that we can't miss along with the food. I feel the cuisine over here is great. Uh, another thing that I like is the biscuits, the bakery biscuits from here, they are fantastic. And along with it, it has its own specialties, the bangles for the ladies. So, I picked a few for my wife. But, also we have got very good support over here. As an Indian cricket team, whenever we come here, the people, they come out, they support us, and we have got a very good record in Hyderabad. You know, we have done very well as a cricket team, so it feels good to be here. It's a pleasure being here. Thanks to all of you, you know, for coming over here and giving me a very warm reception.

Anchor: So, having such a busy schedule, Tamil release and today Telugu, did you get your load of biryani? Did you get your load of biryani?

MS Dhoni: Well, yes I did. You know, of course I didn't eat a lot because this was just before we were coming here. So, I did get a bit of it and, you know, hopefully I'll come here back soon, and I can literally hog the biryani.

Anchor: There are so many people here just to see you. Your fans look upon you as their hero. So, what's the message that you want to give to them?

MS Dhoni: Well, personally, if you ask me, I feel, you know, you have to be honest in life. You have to be honest to yourself. You have to be practical. You have to take risks in life, but at the same time, you have to be calculated. You can't just say, okay, I took a risky option at some point of time, you have to be ready with, ready for the kind of talent that's really needed to achieve what you want to achieve. But at the same, you know, you have to take risks in life. So, for me, being honest in life is very important, hard work that you have to put in, irrespective of what your profession is. The hard work, the honesty, respecting the elders which I feel is the key. You know, if you don't respect the elders, be it your parents or be it anyone, you know, it becomes very difficult to be successful in life. Being humble, you know, try to be, when you enter let's say any big building, you know, right from the first man you meet to maybe the managing director, you have to be the same to each and every one. So, that's what life is all about. Go

through the difficult periods, fight it out. But if you can do it with a smile, you know, you will become part of maybe the 5% persons, you know, who can actually do it. Because at times we crib about life, about the tough period, but what's important is to go through the tough period that actually make you a better human being.

Anchor: Now, we understand that you're not only handsome from outside, but from inside too, Mr. Dhoni.

MS Dhoni: Sorry?

Anchor: You are handsome from inside too.

MS Dhoni: Thanks a lot.

Anchor: Thank you Mr. Cool Captain. So, have you watched any Telugu movies?

MS Dhoni: Me? Okay, if I say the wrong name, you know, don't really scold me. But a few years back, I watched Aparichit. I believe it was in Telugu if I'm not wrong. I saw the whole subtitles. And last year Bahubali I saw, you know, and I just loved it. It was a fantastic movie. We are waiting for the sequel, of course. But yes, the last one that I watched was Bahubali. Of course, it was dubbed in Hindi also so, you know, it was slightly easier. But, you know, I feel in South, there are a lot of very good actors and there are a lot of very good movies that are made in South. And we can actually see a lot of remake getting done in the Bollywood. So, you know, the people over here, they have got some nice stories. They act well, they direct well, and you know, the fans are fantastic, which is very important because you need the fan base to make a movie of that scale. And then when it gets appreciated, you know, you push to make better ones.

Anchor: And talking about Sushant Singh Rajput, he has put his heart and soul into the movie. He looks exactly like you, he behaves like you, and we can see the helicopter shot here. So, how was it watching for the first time, the trailer? How did you feel?

MS Dhoni: Yes, he looks exactly like me. He has played close to nine months of cricket. He has practiced two, two and a half hours every day. So, the most difficult part was to enact the cricketing shots. And I feel he's a very good actor. So, when it comes to doing all the stuff that I do, I knew he would easily achieve that. The only thing was he asked me too many questions as to what goes in my mind, to really get into the character. So, that part was difficult. But other than that, I feel he has done a brilliant work and it's all his hard work that's actually showing on the screen.

Anchor: One last question, Mr. Dhoni. It's been nine years since India won the T20 world cup. So, how does it feel?

MS Dhoni: It was a very special day. The reason being the 2007, 50 over world cup, we had not done well. So, immediately more often than not, you don't get a chance to some extent to redeem yourself. You know, we were all very disappointed with the performance. So, we wanted to make this world cup special, which was the T20 world cup. And I'm glad the team performed to the potential. You know, we went there, we expressed ourselves and, it took everything in our stride. And that I feel is very important because it's not literally a script that you have to follow, you know, when it comes to the tournament. So, you have to be adaptive, you have to be responsive. And I just feel it was a big turning point for us, you know, as cricketers, because from there on, we definitely saw a lot more ups and downs in cricket. But more often than not, we were on the winning side. And that I feel was definitely the changing point.

Anchor: You are a great influence on the youth. You're a great inspiration to the youth. Thank you so much, Mr. Dhoni for answering our questions.

(Crowd Cheering) Dhoni, Dhoni, Dhoni



Ellen Page

Accept Yourself

It's such an honor to be here at the inaugural Time to THRIVE conference. But it's a little weird, too. Here I am, in this room because of an organization whose work I deeply admire. And I'm surrounded by people who make it their life's work to make other people's lives better — profoundly better. Some of you teach young people. Some of you help young people heal and to find their voice. Some of you listen. Some of you take action. Some of you are young people yourselves... in which case, it's even weirder for a person like me to be speaking to you.

It's weird because here I am, an actress, representing — at least in some sense — an industry that places crushing standards on all of us. Not just young people, but everyone. Standards of beauty. Of a good life. Of success. Standards that, I hate to admit, have affected me. You have ideas planted in your head, thoughts you never had before, that tell you how you have to act, how you have to dress and who you have to be. I have been trying to push back, to be authentic, to follow my heart, but it can be hard. But that's why I'm here. In this room, all of you, all of us, can do so much more together than any one person can do alone. And I hope that thought bolsters you as much as it does me. I hope the workshops you'll go to over the next few days give you strength. Because I can only imagine that there are days — when you've worked longer hours than your boss realizes or cares about, just to help a kid who you know can make it. Days where you feel completely alone. Undermined. Or hopeless.

I know there are people in this room who go to school every day and get treated like shit for no reason. Or you go home and you feel like you can't tell your parents the whole truth about yourself. Beyond putting yourself in one box or another, you worry about the future. About college or work or even your physical safety. Trying to create that mental picture of your life — of what on earth is going to happen to you — can crush you a little bit every day. It is toxic and painful and deeply unfair.

Sometimes it's the little, insignificant stuff that can tear you down. I try not to read gossip as a rule, but the other day a website ran an article with a picture of me wearing sweatpants on the way to the gym. The writer asked, "Why does [this] petite beauty insist upon dressing like a massive man?" Because I like to be comfortable. There are pervasive stereotypes about masculinity and femininity that define how we are all supposed to act, dress and speak. They serve no one. Anyone who defies these so called 'norms' becomes worthy of comment and scrutiny. The LGBT community knows this all too well. Yet there is courage all around us. The football hero, Michael Sam. The actress, Laverne Cox. The musicians Tegan and Sara Quinn. The family that supports their daughter or son who has come out. And there is courage in this room. All of you.

I'm inspired to be in this room because every single one of you is here for the same reason. You're here because you've adopted as a core motivation the simple fact that this world would be a whole lot better if we just made an effort to be less horrible to one another. If we took just 5 minutes to recognize each other's beauty, instead of attacking each other for our differences. That's not hard. It's really an easier and better way to live. And ultimately, it saves lives.

Then again, it's not easy at all. It can be the hardest thing, because loving other people starts with loving ourselves and accepting ourselves. I know many of you have struggled with this. I draw upon your strength and your support, and have, in ways you will never know.

I'm here today because I am gay. And because... maybe I can make a difference. To help others have an easier and more hopeful time. Regardless, for me, I feel a personal obligation and a social responsibility. I also do it selfishly, because I am tired of hiding and I am tired of lying by omission. I suffered for years because I was scared to be out. My spirit suffered, my mental health suffered and my relationships suffered. And I'm standing here today, with all of you, on the other side of that pain. I am young, yes, but what I have learned is that love, the beauty of it, the joy of it and yes, even the pain of it, is the most incredible gift to give and to receive as a human being. And we deserve to experience love fully, equally, without shame and without compromise.

There are too many kids out there suffering from bullying, rejection, or simply being mistreated because of who they are. Too many dropouts. Too much abuse. Too many homeless. Too many suicides. You can change that and you are changing it.

But you never needed me to tell you that. That's why this was a little bit weird. The only thing I can really say is what I've been building up to for the past 5 minutes. Thank you. Thank you for inspiring me.

Thank you for giving me hope, and please keep changing the world for people like me.

Happy Valentine's Day. I love you.

Emma and Malala

Amazing Interview



Emma Watson:

Hello everyone. I'm Emma Watson. I'm delighted to be welcoming you all to the opening of the, Into Film Festival. It's an honor to be joined by Malala Yousafzai. Hello, Malala.

Malala Yousafzai:

Hello.

Emma Watson:

First, I just wanted to say how wonderful I thought the film was and that you're just my absolute hero. So, this is...

Malala Yousafzai:

It's my great honor to see you as well.

Emma Watson:

Ah, that's really kind. Thank you.

Emma Watson:

I think the best part of the film for me was that you got to see what obviously made you so extraordinary, but more importantly, ordinary, which shows that anyone can encourage change. And I just thought that was a wonderful message from the film. Do you have a sense of a tangible goal that you would like the Malala fund to reach within your lifetime?

Malala Yousafzai:

So, it's my simple dream and very straightforward. I want to see every child to get quality education. And in order to make sure that their dream comes true, we have to work hard, and we have to take action.

And that's why through the Malala fund, we are working each and every day and now the sustainable development goals are going to be set up. So, we are raising our voice saying that not just primary education should be focused on, but both primary and secondary education should be available to every child. And this has been my mission and I'll make it come true. I'll try my best.

Emma Watson:

How does it feel to have your story shown on film and screen to thousands of young people today as part of the Into Film festival?

Malala Yousafzai:

It's quite interesting, but I don't like seeing myself on TV, or I can't even hear my voice. So, but once the film was made and I watched it, it really inspired me the way Davis Guggenheim, the director of the film has delivered our story through animation and spread the message of education across the world. And it was his commitment to this call that led to this, the making of this movie. And it covers, as you have seen it, it covers like the family story and how we stood up for the right to education at that hard time of terrorism in SWAT Valley.

So, hopefully the message will spread, and it will inspire more people to come together and join the campaign that we are having through the Malala fund, hashtag with Malala and to come together and do something. It's not just that you watch the film, but you do something. And I want this movie not just to be a movie, but a movement.

Emma Watson:

That's amazing. And I thought that the animation in the film was so beautiful and I loved the mythology behind it. And it just really, it was so beautifully done and so well told. And I completely agree with you. I think it's great that people are watching the film and it's wonderful, but it's great that you want people to really do something and take action as well, and that this is about a movement, not just a film. I think it's amazing that it's going so far beyond that. Apart of the film that really touched me, it was how big of a role, you know, your father has played in your life and in the film. How would you respond to anyone who said that, you know, men can't be feminists or shouldn't be campaigning for girl's rights?

Malala Yousafzai:

Well, my father, he has set an example to all parents, in all male, all men that if we want equality, if we want equal rights for women, then we have to, men have to step forward. Because if we complain that women don't get equality, equal rights, it means like all the things are taken by men. So, they need to step back and say, we want, we're here to support. So, it can't happen that men are just thinking it's just a few women's job who are crazy feminist, and they're going to change it. And things are going to be changed soon. It's not going to happen like this. We all have to work together. That's how change will come. And this is the role that my father has taken. He believes in women's rights; he believes in equality and he calls himself a feminist.

But interestingly, this word feminism, it has been a very tricky word. And I had, when I heard it the first time I was, I heard it in like I heard some negative responses and some positive ones, and I hesitated in saying, am I a feminist or not? And then after hearing your speech when you said, if not now, when, if not me, who, I decided that there's no way, and there's nothing wrong by calling yourself a feminist. So, I am a feminist and you all should be feminist because feminism is another word for equality.

Emma Watson:

Wow. I'm so moved to hear that. That's absolutely amazing. And I agree with you. It's become this really difficult word, but I think it's wonderful when people do embrace it, because it should be synonymous with equality.

Malala Yousafzai:

People have forgotten its definition.

Emma Watson:

They really, really have. So, that's wonderful. Wow. I'm so moved to hear that. Well, it's kind of a similar question, but what would you say to people who argue that religion and educating women are odds? I thought, again, it was so wonderful in the film to show how important your faith and your spirituality were in giving you strength to do the work that you do. I just thought that was such a wonderful part of the film, but what would you say to people that, you know, that use scripture to say that women shouldn't be educated or that argue that educating women is a Western concept or a Western idea?

Malala Yousafzai:

I think people fail to understand religious beliefs, especially when it comes to Islam. They have failed to understand that Islam, the word Islam means peace. So, they have failed to understand that the very first word of the Holy Quran was Iqra, which means read. It wasn't that only male should read it and not female. It was about reading; it was about learning and getting knowledge.

So, in Islam, you believe that God has sent you to this Earth, you are there to gain knowledge, to learn and to discover more. And this is what we are here for. And so, people have just misinterpreted the religion. And for me, Islam is a religion of peace, which is for the goodness of whole humanity. And it's for the brotherhood, kindness, patience, love for each other. And I don't know why, like people just go crazy and kill each other and start terrorism. Just live a better life and be kind. Why is it so hard to love each other?

Emma Watson:

That's amazing. And yes, I completely.

Malala Yousafzai:

In terms of brothers, it's different because I have two brothers and we are never good to each other. We fight. That's a separate case, but overall...

Emma Watson:

I can relate. I actually have brothers. There's a lot of fighting that goes on, it's not very peaceful.

Malala Yousafzai:

All my prayers are with you. Yeah.

Emma Watson:

Yeah. Tough for the parents. I was wondering, are you excited to see Hillary Clinton, a woman running for

president in the US?

Malala Yousafzai:

Well, I don't really have any views about, like I don't really know, I haven't really decided on which political side I am in America.

Emma Watson:

I know.

Malala Yousafzai:

But yeah, I really want, I really think America needs a woman president. That's what I think.

Emma Watson:

I agree with this. I agree with this. Very trivial question compared to some of the others about, I had to ask, that really, really bright pink color that you wear, it's one of my absolute favorite colors and I see you wear that a lot, and I wondered if it was lucky or if it had any sort of special meaning to you.

Malala Yousafzai:

I don't know this, but I have always liked pink color. And when I was going to the UN speech, I wore pink

that day. I don't know why. And so, yes. And now the film...

Emma Watson:

Is all pink, orange.

Malala Yousafzai:

Is all orange and pink. So, I think it's everywhere.

Emma Watson:

Yeah. Must be a thing. I feel it's nice because I get the impression that you're someone who is generally sort of, you know, shy that is struggling with all of the attention that's being thrust on her. But I thought it was wonderful that you have chosen this bright color, which meant that you wanted to be seen and, you

know, and you wanted to spread your message in spite of that. And I thought that was wonderful.

Malala Yousafzai:

Thank you.

Emma Watson:

As a big book fan, I have to ask you, what was your last favorite book? Was there anything that you read in the last year that you just fell in love with?

Malala Yousafzai:

Right now, I'm reading, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini and it's just beautiful. Everyone should read it.

Emma Watson:

It's a wonderful book. I've also read this book and it's an amazing book.

Malala Yousafzai:

I just can't explain it, it's like the best book created.

Emma Watson:

I was curious, what are the thing you found the strangest about England compared to Pakistan? What they all would be?

Malala Yousafzai:

So, in our books, we studied that there are four seasons and in Pakistan we had four seasons, but in the UK, I just found that was one season, it was always winter. That was quite surprising. Then, and then the surprising thing was that in the UK, people follow traffic rules.

Emma Watson:

Ah. Yes.

Malala Yousafzai:

Yeah. Which is quite surprising. In our country, maybe name a few cities, people are nice, but in the rest of the country, no traffic rules at all. So, that was quite surprising. But then more than that, it's the love of people and how they have given so much support. And I have never felt, like being from another country, it's just, I have so many friends here. And all the teachers in my school, they have been supporting me and keeping me like a normal girl. And that's what's really good. And I love it. Yeah. I'm going to stay here.

Emma Watson:

Okay. I'm glad to hear that. I'm really glad to hear that because I know you have to deal with being famous. And I was going to ask you, what I sometimes get asked, which would be what you would do if you could be anonymous for a day. And then it sorts of, it stopped me dead in my tracks because I realized exactly what you would do. And it really struck me, you know, what you've sacrificed for your ideals and your dream and this movement. And it made me really emotional actually. And so, I just wanted to thank you again for being who you are and for being so brave. So, other than going home, is there anything that you liked the idea of doing, if you could be, if you had magical powers and you could be invisible for a day, what you would do?

Malala Yousafzai:

Well, I haven't gone back to Pakistan for three years, since that, I again, I'd love to go back to my country and it's just to achieve the goal I have, because sometimes people feel like I've got the Nobel peace prize and the book and the film they're released. And like, there's nothing else that I need. But people fail to understand that my goal, which is to see every child going to school hasn't been achieved yet. And that's what I want to see come true.

And it's really important that we come together, and we support each other. This is about the future of all those 66 million girls who cannot go to school right now. It's about our future, it is going to affect every

one of us. If so, many children are out of school, they don't get education and they have, girls especially, they have potential. They can contribute to society. If you are stopping half of the population not to come forward, how can you think of progress and achievements? So, it's important that we think it's our responsibility to participate actively in bringing change. It's we who can bring change.

Emma Watson:

66 million girls is such a huge number. It's such a massive number to think about that can't go to school. So, those are my questions. I know that, very sweetly, we have questions from members of the audience, which is brilliant. So, I'll stop taking up all of the time. Why is it important for girls and boys to be treated equally? And this is from Grace Dane at Mill Primary School in Leicester.

I think, it's that to treat everyone as a human being. And just because your gender is different, does not mean that you should be treated differently, and you should have certain jobs and you shouldn't have certain things in your life. That's like the very, you churn that very concept of inequality based on your gender. Your gender should not be any, it should not create any difficulty in the choices that you make. It's a very simple thing. Like it's about equality, it's about feminism. It's about saying that we're all human beings. Why you separate us, just because our gender is different.

Emma Watson:

Slightly agree. Which of your teachers inspired you the most? And this is from Delano, in Manchester.

Malala Yousafzai:

I should say like, my father was a teacher and he inspired me, but your parents can be your teachers. And it's like the first stage when you start learning. But also, I love all my teachers. Here in the school, in the UK and all my teachers in Pakistan school. I just love all of my teachers. I kind of, I'm really scared of teachers as well. Yeah.

Emma Watson:

Okay. So, love and fear, both together.

Malala Yousafzai:

Yeah.

Emma Watson:

That's good. If you could give us, 12-13-year old any advice, what would it be? And this is from Jake in Northern Ireland.

Malala Yousafzai:

I think an important thing that you should know at this stage, 12, 13 years of age, is that don't think that you are young, and you can't do something. When I was writing the blog for BBC, I was just 11 years old. When I started speaking out, that was my age, the age which you are at. So, don't think that your age can stop you from going forward. As we talk about gender, as we talk about religion and all these things, age is also one of them. So, don't think you're young, so you don't have ideas and your ideas won't work. And sometimes we just think I'm young, so I am not at the stage where I can just make a bigger change and I can explore all the big, bigger ideas. Age cannot put limit to what you want to do. So, come forward and do the things that you want to do. Don't think that one day I will grow up and I'll do things. Don't wait for the stage. It would be too late.

Emma Watson:

Yeah. Now is the time.

Malala Yousafzai:

Yes.

Emma Watson:

Ageism is a huge issue actually. And every voice feeling is important. Are you enjoying your education these days in your school in Birmingham? And this question's from Elisa in Cheshire.

Malala Yousafzai:

Oh, yes. I am enjoying my education. Well, there's a lot to do right now because I'm doing A levels. It's like

a sudden change from GCSE to A levels, but the subjects I'm doing are history, economics, maths, and religious studies. And I really like them. So, that's why I'm enjoying it.

Emma Watson:

Great choices. Very serious choices. Brilliant. How is education for girls in your country now? And that's from Asher, in Enfield and Northeast London.

Malala Yousafzai:

So, the reality is that the situation is not the same in every part of the country. So, for example, in the capital Islamabad in Pakistan, there are girls going to school. But then there are many parts in which girls cannot go to school. And about 5 to 6 million children at primary level are out of school in Pakistan. In the

most of the data that we mention, like about the number of girls who are out of school, there's no data, enough data about the girls who are out of the secondary education because no one really even count them. The number you hear are just focused on primary level.

So, that is also tragic that we don't collect the data that we need, which is how many girls dropped school at secondary level and how many are out of school. But in terms of primary education, there are about like 5 to 6 million children in Pakistan. And it's really important that we think of supporting them in education. Pakistan is now, right now at a stage of having, trying to develop strong democracy and improve and fight against terrorism. And if we forget the education of our next generation, I don't think we won't be able to achieve that progress. We need to educate the future generation and then they can

build a more peaceful and better Pakistan.

Emma Watson:

What would you say to young people who do not like, enjoy or appreciate school? And this is for Ms. Skinner. She's a teacher in Cardiff.

Malala Yousafzai:

Well, I should tell that, like my brothers, I tell them every day that they should focus on their studies because they spend their time on Xbox and computers. And sometimes we, like we go to school every day and it's for many, many years of our life. But in between you forget its importance. And I know its importance because when I was 11, I was stopped from going to school. And the next day when I woke up

and I just could not go to school and I could not believe it that for the rest of my life, I wouldn't be able to study at all. And I wouldn't be able to become a doctor or teacher, or anything I liked. And that was the stage when I realized that education is really important for every child.

So, before you see this stage, realize it now, I don't want you to go through that situation ever. So, realize that it's for your future, it is for the future of your country. In a way you are contributing to your society.

And just believe in yourself, believe in the power of education.

Emma Watson:

I think it's very easy to take for granted and it is actually a gift. What do your younger brothers think about your efforts? And this is from Artem in London.

Malala Yousafzai:

Well, they're really annoying. And they fight with me all the time. However, they're sometimes nice. And sometimes they think I'm doing good work. Yes.

Emma Watson:

Well, that's good. Sometimes, sometimes, that's something. My brothers are the same, by the way. What were your feelings when you had to speak publicly for the first time in front of presidents and prime ministers and that's from Merriam in Manchester.

Malala Yousafzai:

I think I should say, I feel really scared in school, speaking in school. But in terms of meeting presidents and prime minister, and then talking about a cause, which really matters, then you have to forget about getting nervous and the way you deliver the speech. Forget all those things and say, what's in your heart. Do not hesitate. When I was meeting the president of Nigeria to talk about the girls who are abducted by Boko Haram, I said it very clearly that, what are you doing? What have you done so far? Because three months had passed, and the president had not even met them. And then he announced that he would meet the parents. This is, you say it clearly, why to hesitate, why to stop yourself. And like before, it was meeting the president of America, Barack Obama or anyone, I say things very, very clearly because it's not for me, it's for children and their future.

Emma Watson:

It's great that you see it as something which isn't, it's personal obviously, but it's so much bigger than that. And you use the power and the strength of that to really, you know, push away any nerves, which is great. How did you find the filmmaking process and what did you learn from it? It's from Olivia in East Lothian.

Malala Yousafzai:

It was very long. It covered the two years journey of my life and, like going to Jordan and just be called for the senior deputy children, going to Nigeria and Kenya and giving speeches, meeting world leaders, which also tells the story of our family. So, it was a very, it was a great experience working together with Davis Guggenheim. And then, I didn't know what am I going to see at the end and the way that he made it was very beautiful, especially the animation. Because I was wondering how is he going to tell the story of my father, my mother, and our past, and he has done it very well.

Emma Watson:

What do you plan to do next to further promote equality? And that's from Mavis in Middlesex.

Malala Yousafzai:

Well it's, so as I said, I have this fund, the Malala fund, and through that I'm working for education, for equality. And to ensure that girls go to school. But like, how many schools can I build? I can either build 9,

10 schools and it's all through your support, through your donations that we build school, but then we need our leaders to take action. We need every one of us to come forward. It's not the, just a few NGOs who have to do this work. Its each and every one of us who have to come forward and contribute to it from world leaders, to parents, to civil society, to everyone, even to you. Even if you are 11 or 12, don't think you can't do it. You all have to come forward and participate in it.

And now it's time that we ask all governments where the money is spent. We give taxes, we expect something from all governments. And now it's time that we stand up and look where the money goes. Is it spent on education? If not, why not? And why are governments not willing to help children's education, especially in conflict zones right now, in Syria where 2 million children are now refugees and they're out of school. And it's important that we raise this point, otherwise things won't change. It will just remain the same.

Emma Watson:

Voices are important, speaking out and asking governments to do the right thing. Super, super, super important. Well, we've got through all of the questions that we've been sent, which is brilliant. So, maybe I will take this moment just to say, thank you. Again, the film is so wonderful, and your story is beyond inspiring.

Malala Yousafzai:

Thank you for your time. And it's great to have you. And I think it would be great if you give a message to

all these children who are listening to us right now, because you also stand for a cause that is very important. We want equality and there would be so many boys in the audience. Yeah.

Emma Watson:

Yes, boys in the audience specifically, I work for a cause called He for She. If you haven't signed up yet, then that would be wonderful. But we really need you as the next generation to extend a hand to the goals and the women in your life, and to include them and to make sure that they can live their lives without discrimination, and that they have access to the same opportunities that you do. And you're in a unique position.

You have a unique opportunity to do that, to support the girls and the women in your life. And if you have the chance, if moments are presented to you, do speak up, do you raise your voice. Your support could literally change a girl's life, could change someone's life. And you know, gender equality is something that

will affect your life too, as men and as boys. And it's just an issue that I believe about so passionately.

And

any of your help or support is greatly, greatly appreciated. And thank you so much.

Malala Yousafzai:

Thank you.

Emma Watson:

Thank you, Malala.

Malala Yousafzai:

Well, thank you.

Emma Watson:

Thank you.

Malala Yousafzai:
Nice to talk to you.

Neil Degrasse Tyson

Human Motivator



Thank you for that warm introduction, but it requires a couple of clarifications I'd like to offer. That asteroid with my name on it before I agreed to accept that distinction, I verified it was not headed towards earth. Because that would be rough right there that story Tyson takes out North America. Also, that People Magazine distinction sexiest astrophysicist alive. First you have to consider the category, all right. I don't... not something you get big headed about I don't think. Indeed, my wife is a graduate of Rice

University and somehow of all the things that she remembers most, what I seem to hear most about was baker beer bike, right. Is that still happen?

Now back when she was there the official drinking age in Texas was still 14. So, I don't know. Now, why am I asked to deliver this commencement address? I think it's because of my association, my long association as sort of a follower and advisor of NASA. And it was announced that this is the hundredth anniversary the closing of the hundredth year of the founding of the school. It's also the closing of the 50th year of the famous speech given by president Kennedy in Rice Stadium to an audience of 35,000 people. Titled, 'We choose to go to the moon' speech. That very phrase appears in the speech and it is followed by the phrase, 'Not because it's easy, but because it's hard.' That speech was delivered here on the campus of Rice university.

That was delivered a year after president Kennedy announced that maybe the moon is something, we should do some place we should go to. That was first announced in congress, May 25th, 1961. We were spooked into him saying that. Six weeks before that speech the Soviet Union launched Yuri Gagarin into orbit. As I tweeted about a year ago, Yuri again was the fifth mammal to achieve this feat. After a dog, a chimp, a few mice, and a hamster. But the point there is, in that speech that's where he uttered the phrase, 'We will put a man on a moon return him safely to earth before the decade is out.' That's kind of all he said about the moon in that speech. The whole plan got laid out in Rice Stadium a year later. So, you can say, oh we had charisma and will and political motivation back then, until you look at the beginning of that speech he gave to congress. Three paragraphs, two or three paragraphs before he says we'll go to the moon. He says, 'The events of recent weeks Yuri Gagarin going into orbit'. If those are any

indication of the impact of this adventure on the minds of men everywhere, then we need to show the

world the path to freedom over the path to tyranny. It was a battle cry against communism. People were spooked. NASA got founded a year after Sputnik was launched, motivated by a cold war climate. So, what happens

president Kennedy gives his let's go to the moon speech in Rice Stadium, a year later Rice donates the land that is Johnson space center. That is the seat of the astronaut program of NASA. Rice university was there at the beginning of this epic adventure to the moon. Now I've studied this, what drives people to do things. I've looked throughout all of time, all of human time and I found only three drivers that get people to do things in a big way. One of them is war, that's obvious to any political analyst.

War makes you spend money like it's a flowing river. Even when you don't have money you spend the money like it's a flowing river. War, one of the great motivators of human conduct. A next motivator is money. So, the first is I don't want to die. The next one is I don't want to die poor, right. Two great motivators in the history of human cultures. There's a third motivator much less revealed in the world today and that's the praise of royalty and deity. That's what gets you the pyramids in Egypt and the Church building and Cathedral building of Europe.

Today you don't find Gods and kings driving major investments. So, we're left with just sort of war and money, that's kind of what's going on here. But we haven't been honest with ourselves about that. If you go to Kennedy space center in Florida, there is that section of his speech. We'll go to the moon before the decade is out and it stands chills up your spine. Because he galvanized an entire nation. But what's missing on the granite wall behind where this is chiseled in, is the other part of the speech. Where he introduces the war driver. No one ever spent big money just to explore. No, no one has ever done that.

I wish they did, but they don't. So, we went to the moon on a war driver. But that's conveniently left out in the granite wall behind Kennedy. They could have put it in, and they could have summarized. Kill the commies go to the moon, right. That's what they could have said but they didn't. That part got cleansed from our memory. So, cleansed from our memory that 20 years after we landed on the moon George Herbert Walker Bush wants to give a similar kind of rabble-rousing speech that Kennedy did.

July 20th, 1989, he goes to the steps of the air and space museum in Washington an auspicious day, commemorating the moon landing. An auspicious moment, and he puts a lot of the same language in his speech. Reflecting on Columbus Voyages and all the, which was driven by money by the way. All the great

explorers of the past saying, it's our time it's time to go to Mars, time to go to Mars. It got costed out at \$500 billion, it was DOA in congress at \$500 billion. But, wait a minute. That was going to be spent over about 30 years. You divide 500 billion by 30, that's about \$16 billion a year, that's NASA's annual budget.

You could have just made that the trip to Mars, but people got spooked by the money. Why? You know what else happened in 1989, peace broke out in Europe. That's what happened in 1989 the war driver evaporated. No, we didn't go to Mars, no and people are saying. 'oh, we lost our drive; we lost our will.' No, it's the same will we've ever had we just weren't threatened. That's a sobering thought. But I had there's a solution in there I think, there's a solution. How about the money driver? Do you realize in the 1960s, the GDP per capita of the united states rose 35% across that decade and it hasn't risen that high since?

In fact, in the decade of this century it rose 0% between 2000 and 2010. It been dropping ever since. Of course, there's a lot of complex analysis related to that but all I'm saying is one could say that going into space inspires people. You can remove the war driver and say it'll boost our economy, not just spin-offs. You always have spin off who doesn't love a good spin-off. But it inspires people to innovate. Headlines: We're going to the moon. We're going to Mars. We're looking for water. We're looking for fuel. We want to deflect an asteroid. These headlines hit the press and you convert; you shape a nation into one that becomes an innovation nation. That's what was going on in the 60s.

Everybody was thinking about the future. That was the bloodiest decade on American soil since the civil war a hundred years earlier. Civil rights movement, campus unrest, 100 servicemen dying a week in a hot war in Southeast Asia. We were in the middle of the cold war. 1968, the bloodiest year in that decade, two assassinations. Apollo 8, an unheralded mission hardly ever hears of Apollo 8. The first mission to leave earth and go someplace other than orbit. It went to the moon, didn't land but it went to the moon, December, 1968. It orbited the moon, came around the back side. They held up a camera and there was earth rising over the lunar surface.

That to this day is the most recognized photograph of anything at any time of any object earthrise. And there was earth, not as we had ever seen it. It was in display as nature would have you absorb what it is. There was earth, not with color-coded countries. There was earth with oceans, land, clouds. Do you realize no representation of earth before that included clouds? No one thought to think that maybe the atmosphere is part of earth. No one drew that before. So, what happens? Here's something interesting. Over the next four years 1969, 70, 71, 72, 73, 5 years the following happens on earth.

The environmental protection agency is founded. A comprehensive clean air act, a comprehensive clean water act is passed. Earth day is founded. The organization doctors without borders is founded. Where do they get that phrase without borders? Where did that come from? Did anyone before that photo think of earth as a place without borders? No. What else happened? DDT was banned, the catalytic converter was introduced, leaded gas was removed from the environment. All of this happened in those five years, while we were still at war. Something changed about us, after the publication of that photo.

It was a cultural response to our presence in space. It affected commerce, it affected how we treated earth. It affected our outlook, it had us thinking about a future as never before. The world's fair in New York city was all about the future. The world's fair didn't create that decade the decade created that world's fair. So, you know what happens? You go to the moon; you look back and it's a whole new perspective a cosmic perspective. We went to the moon to explore it, but in fact we discovered earth for the first time. That takes vision. By the way, the first president of Rice University was an astrophysicist. Look it up.

What a private enterprise they're there, they're going to help out but not going to lead this. You know why they can't lead it? Because space is expensive, it's dangerous and it has unquantified risks. You put all

three of those under one umbrella, it cannot establish a capital market valuation of that exercise. Private enterprise comes later governments need to do that first to find out where the trade winds are, map the coastlines of space. Then private enterprise comes in, that's how it's always happened. That's how it happened with Columbus. The first Europeans to the new world were not the Dutch East India trading company ships. It was Columbus funded by Spain in a vision that the nation had of exploration.

All of you will graduate in some kind of major today, a major. But you know what your major is? You can

boast what you know in your major but at the end of the day it's actually a stovepipe. You know a lot about this thing that sits in a stovepipe. But I just described to you the Apollo program that involved mathematicians, scientists, engineers, artists. Artists captured what this voyage was on the pages of life magazine and collier's magazine. Artists, engineers, lawyers, yes. There are lawyers in there too. It was an entire participation of a culture. An interplay of politics, science, technology and who and what we were as a nation.

So, your diploma is really not a ticket to show off what you know. You know what it really is? It's permission to admit to yourself how much you still have yet to learn. And you know it's still left to learn, all the things that come together when great things happen in a nation, when great things happen in a world. As I said the science, the art, the geopolitics all of that matters. Nothing happens without some touching of all those branches of culture. There is no solution to a problem that does not embrace all that

we have created as a species.

So, I can tell you the original seeds the space programs were planted right here on this campus. And I can tell you that in the years since we landed on the moon America has lost its exploratory compass. But I know the talent that is seated here, because I have conversations with my wife. I know who's in front of me right now. I know what legacy means. I know what happened here 50 years ago. I know all of this. I can tell you that, now is the time for you the class of 2013 to lead the nation as Rice graduates once again.

Thank you all for your time.



Beyonce

Make Them See You

Thank you, President Obama and Mrs. Obama for including me in this very special day and congratulations to the class of 2020. You have arrived here in the middle of a global crisis, a racial pandemic and worldwide expression of outrage at the senseless killing of yet another unarmed black human being. And you still made it. We're so proud of you. Thank you for using your collective voice and

letting the world know that black lives matter. The killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and so many others have left us all broken. It has left the entire country searching for answers. We've seen that our collective hearts when put to positive action could start the wheels of change. Real change has started with you, this new generation of high school and college graduates who we celebrate today. I did not get to experience college like some of you or the campus parties that left you struggling the next day in class. Although that could have been fun. But my parents did teach me the value of education, how to be authentic in my actions and how to celebrate individuality and the importance of investing in myself.

Dear graduates, please remember to take a little bit of time to give thanks to your family members and the community, who's been such a big support system for you. You are achieving things your parents and grandparents never could imagine for themselves. You are the answer to a generation of prayers. Now some of you might be the first in your family to graduate from college. Maybe you did not follow the path that was expected of you, and you probably questioned everything about your decision. But know that stepping out is the best thing you can do for self discovery. I know how hard it is to step out and bet on yourself. There was a pivotal turning point in my life when I chose to build my own company many years ago. I had to trust that I was ready and that my parents and mentors provided me with the tools I needed to be successful. But that was terrifying.

The entertainment business is still very sexist. It's still very male-dominated. And as a woman, I did not see enough female role models given the opportunity to do what I knew I had to do, to run my label and management company, to direct my films and produce my tours. That meant ownership, owning my masters, owning my art, owning my future and writing my own story. Not enough black women had a seat at the table. So I had to go and chop down that wood and build my own table. Then I had to invite the best there was to have a seat. That meant hiring women, men, outsiders, underdogs, people that were overlooked and waiting to be seen. Many of the best creatives and business people who although,

supremely qualified and talented, were turned down over and over as executives at major corporations because they were female or because of racial disparity.

And I've been very proud to provide them with a place at my table. One of the main purposes of my art for many years has been dedicated to showing the beauty of black people to the world, our history, our profundity, and the value of black lives. Now I've tried my best to pull down the veil of appeasement to those who may feel uncomfortable with our excellence. To the young women, our future leaders, know that you're about to make the world turn. I see you. You are everything the world needs. Make those power moves, be excellent. And to the young kings, lean into your vulnerability and redefine masculinity, lead with heart. There's so many different ways to be brilliant. I believe you and every human being is born with a masterful gift. Don't make the world make you feel that you have to look a certain way to be brilliant and no, you don't have to speak a certain way to be brilliant. But you do have to spread your gift around the planet in a way that is authentically you.

To all those who feel different, if you're a part of a group that's called other, a group that does not get the chance to be center stage, build your own stage and make them see you. Your queerness is beautiful. Your blackness is beautiful. Your compassion, your understanding, your fight for people who may be different from you is beautiful. I hope you continue to go into the world and show them that you will never stop being yourself. That it's your time now, make them see you. Now, if you've ever been called dumb, unattractive, overweight, unworthy, untalented, well, so have I. Whatever you do, don't let negativity of people projecting their own self doubts on you, deter you from your focus. I know those moments are painful and you're human and it hurts like hell. But now is the time to turn those criticisms into fuel and motivation to become a beautiful beast.

Respect is everything. There's no successful relationship without respect, nor a successful movement if the basic principle is not respect. The world will respect you as much as you respect yourself. I'm often asked, "What's your secret to success?" The shorter answer, put in that work. There may be more failures than victories. Yes, I've been blessed to have 24 Grammys, but I've lost 46 times. That meant rejection 46 times. Please don't ever feel entitled to win, just keep working harder. Surrender to the cards you are dealt. It's from that surrender that you get your power. Losing can be the best motivator to get you even bigger wins. So never compare yourself to anyone else. There will be wins and losses. There will be tears and laughter. You'll feel the shades of life deeply. Now with success comes challenges. With your wins, you may start to notice people spending a lot of energy trying to tear you down.

Try not to take it personally. Unfortunately, it's something that comes along with success. Whenever you feel like you're not in control or the world is against you, let that vulnerability motivate you into greatness. That's how I found my true self. I remain a work in progress and that's the beauty of growth. I've been happiest when I let go and allow life to show me the next move. When you bet on yourself, you're making an investment into your own future. When you choose to spend your valuable time thinking, speaking, typing negative thoughts, you're investing in something that will give you absolutely no return in your investment. Class of 2020, every thought in your mind is powerful. Every word you speak is powerful. Every action you take has consequences for yourself and your community. Look what you have been able to do in the last 14 days.

We've seen the power of the collective. We've seen what happens when we join for the same cause. Please continue to be the voice for the voiceless. Never forget, we can disagree in a way that is productive to arrive at decisions that foster real change. And if you make a mistake, that's okay too. But we all have a responsibility to hold ourselves accountable and change. Whatever the world looks like in 10

years, in 20 years, part of that is up to you. I urge you to let this current moment push you to improve yourself in all areas of your life. At work, at home, activism, spirituality, wherever you can find hope, follow it. And remember you are never alone. Lean on that strength of togetherness. Keep the collective

strong, stay focused. Don't talk about what you're going to do. Don't just dream about what you're going to do.

Don't criticize somebody else for what they're not doing. You be it. Be about it. Be about that action and go do it. Keep your eye on your intention. Don't let any outside distraction or your own insecurity stop you from your goals. Embrace that struggle. Surviving that struggle will strengthen you. This is a crucial time in our history and in your life. The Earth is ripping that bandaid off so we can really see our wounds, so we can acknowledge and nurture them. That's when true healing begins. You can be that leader we all need, you can lead the movement that celebrates humanity. My prayer for you is that you invest in yourself and see the value of giving back and building your community the best way you can.

I pray that you continue to celebrate and value lives that appear different than your own. I know you are ready to start one of the most important journeys of your life. You are at the brink of a huge world shift. Look how far you've come and how much you contributed. Keep pushing, forget the fear, forget the doubt, keep investing and keep betting on yourself and congratulations.

Chadwick Boseman

What you fight for



It is a great privilege, graduates to address you on your day, a day marking one of the most important accomplishments of your life to date. This is a magical place, a place where the dynamics of positive and negative seem to exist in extremes. I remember walking across this yard on what seemed to be a random day, my head down lost in my own world of issues like many of you do daily. I'm almost at the center of the yard. I raised my head and Muhammad Ali was walking towards me. Time seemed to slow down as his eyes locked on mine and opened wide. He raised his fist to a quintessential guard. I was game to play along with him, to act as if I was a worthy opponent. What an honor to be challenged by the goat, the greatest of all time for a brief moment. His face was as serious as if I was Frazier in the Thrilla in Manila. His movements were flashes of a path greater than I can imagine. His security let the joke play along for a second before they ushered him away, and I walked away floating like a butterfly. I walked away amused at him, amused at myself, amused at life for this moment that almost no one would ever believe. I walked away light and ready to take on the world. That is the magic of this place. Almost anything can happen here. HU! You know! Howard University, I was riding here and I heard on the radio, somebody called it Wakanda University. But it has many names, the Mecca, the Hilltop. It only takes one hour, one tour of the physical campus to understand why we call it the Hilltop. Every day is leg day here. That's why some of you have cars. During my junior and senior years, I lived in a house off campus at Bryant Street. For those of you... That's right, Brian Street. For those of you who don't know what that means that's at the bottom of the hill where the incline gets real. Almost every day I would walk the full length of the hill to Fine Arts where most of my classes were, carrying all of my books, because once you walked that far on foot, you are not walking back home until it's time to go home for good. But beyond the physical campus, the Hilltop represents the culmination of the intellectual and spiritual journey you have undergone while you were here. You have been climbing this academic slope for at

least three or four years. For some of you, maybe even a little bit more. Throughout ancient times, institutions of learning have been built on top of hills to convey that great struggle is required to achieve degrees of

enlightenment. Each of you had your own unique difficulties with the hill. For some of you, the challenge was actually academics. When you hear the words Magna Cum Laude, Cum Laude, you know that's not you.

That's not you. You worked hard. You did your best, but you didn't make As or Bs, sometimes Cs. You never made the Dean's list, but that's okay. You are here on top of the hill.

I want to say something to that. You know, sometimes your grades don't give a real indication of what your greatness might be. So it really is okay. For others it was financial. You and your family struggled to make ends meet. Every semester of your matriculation, you had to stand in one line to get to another line, to get

to another line for somebody that might help you. You had to work an extra job or two, but you are here. For a lot of you, not all, but a lot of you, your hardest struggle was social. Some of you never fit in. You were

never as cool and as popular as you wanted to be and it bothers you. So your social struggles here became psychological. Even though you made it up to hill, you carried the baggage of rejection with you, but you are here.

Some of you went through something traumatic. You made it to the top of the hill, but not without scars and bruises. Some of you fit in too much. You were on the yard rapping on your frat block when you were

supposed to be in class. Or you got caught up into DC party life. I know how that is. I mean, we are right here in the midst of the city. Sometimes you forgot you were in school. You probably could have graduated

with honors, but instead you are getting an "Oh yeah" degree today. Oh yeah, I have class. Oh yeah, I have

that paper due. Oh yeah, I have a final. You were literally too cool for school. You waited until the last minute to do your best work and it's a wonder that you made it up the hill at all because you carry the baggage of too much acceptance.

Most of you graduating here today struggled against one or more of the impediments or obstacles I've mentioned in order to reach this hill top. When completing a long climb, one first experiences dizziness, disorientation and shortness of breath due to the high altitude, but once you become accustomed to the climb, your mind opens up to the tranquility of the triumph. Oftentimes the mind is flooded with realizations that were, for some reason harder to come to when you were at a lower elevation. At this moment, most of you need some realizations because right now you have some big decisions to make.

Right

now I urge you in your breath, in your eyes, in your consciousness, invest in the importance of this moment

and cherish it. I know some of you might've partied last night. You should, you should celebrate, but this moment is also a part of that celebration. So savor the taste of your triumphs today. Don't just swallow the moment whole without digesting what has actually happened here. Look down over what you conquered and appreciate what God has brought you through.

Some of you here struggled against the university itself. This year, students protested and took over the A building, formulated a list of demands and negotiated with our president and administration to determine the direction of our institution. It's impressive. Similarly, during my years here at Howard, we also protested

and took over the A building in order to preserve Howard's alum, in order to preserve Howard's annual appropriations from Congress. President H. Patrick Swygert decided to reduce the number of colleges at the university. By his plan, Engineering would need to merge with architecture. Nursing would merge with Allied

Health and the Fine Arts, my school will be absorbed by arts and sciences. That's how we saw it, absorbed.

For many of us in Fine Arts, this signaled to us that our curriculums, all the curriculums of students following

us might become watered down concentrations. This undermined the very legacy we were proud to be a part of and aimed to continue. The Fine Arts program had produced Phylcia Rashad, Debbie Allen, Isaiah

Washington, Richard Wesley, Donny Hathaway, Roberta Flack, just to name a few. We felt that... Yes, yes.

You could go on and on. You can go on and on. You can go on and on. We felt that we could compete with

students from Juilliard, NYU and Carroll Arts as long as we continued to have a concentrated dosage that rivaled a conservatory experience, but without it...

Although we took over the A building for several days and presented our arguments to President Swygert and the administration, the schools were still merged. Thus, the current collection or formation of schools exists. That's why I view your recent protest is such an accomplishment for both sides of the debate, student

and administration. I didn't come here to take sides. My interest is what's best for the school. A Howard University education is not just about what happens in the classroom, students. In some ways, what you were able to do exemplifies some of the skills you learned in the classroom. It takes the education out of the

realm of theory and into utility and practice. Obviously, your organizational skills were unprecedented.

I'm

told that you organized shifts so that you could at least continue some of your classes. We missed all our classes. We were in the A building. I'm told that through donations, there was always an ample helping of food. I probably ate a slice of pizza during the entirety of our three day protest.

Your organization and planning was impeccable. You received the majority of your demands, making a significant impact on those who came after you. As is often the case, those that follow most often enjoy the

results of the progress you gained. You love the university enough to struggle with it. Now, I have to ask you

that you have to continue to do that even now that you received your demands. Even if you are walking today, you have to continue to do that. Everything that you fought for was not for yourself. It was for those

that come after. You could have been disgruntled and transferred, but you fought to be participants in making this institution the best that it can be. But I must also applaud President Wayne Frederick and the administration for listening to the students.

Your freedom of speech was exercised in a way where you can contribute to this place. It also shows that you can contribute to the democracy. The administration and the campus police at the time when I was protesting were not nearly as open-minded as this current one. I know this was a difficult time, but because

of both of you, I believe Howard is a few steps closer to the actualization of its potential, the potential that many of us have dreamed for it. Students, your protests are also promising because many of you will leave

Howard and enter systems and institutions that have a history of discrimination and marginalization. The fact that you have struggled with this university that you love is a sign that you can use your education to improve the world that you are entering.

I was on a roll when I entered the system of entertainment, theater, television and film. In my first New York

audition for a professional play I landed the lead role. From that play, I got my first agent. From that agent, I

got an onscreen audition. It was a soap opera. It wasn't Third Watch. It was a soap opera on a major network. I scored that role too. I felt like Mike Tyson when he first came on the scene knocking out opponents in the first round. With this soap opera gig, I was already promised to make 6 figures, more money than I had ever seen. I was feeling myself. But once I got the first script and was so problems. You very often get the script the night before and then you shoot the whole episode in one day with little to no time to prepare.

Once I saw the role I was playing, I found myself conflicted. The role wasn't necessarily stereotypical. A young man in his formative years with a violent streak pulled into the allure of gang involvement. That's somebody's real story. Never judge the characters you play. That's what we were always taught. That's the first rule of acting. Any role play honestly, can be empowering, but I was conflicted because this role seemed to be wrapped up in assumptions about us as black folk. The writing failed to search for specificity. Plus, there was barely a glimpse of positivity or talent in the character, barely a glimpse of hope. I would

have to make something out of nothing. I was conflicted. Howard had instilled in me a certain amount of pride and for my taste this role didn't live up to those standards.

It was just my luck that after filming the first two episodes, execs of the show called me into their offices and told me how happy they were with my performance. They wanted me to be around for a long time. They said if there was anything that I needed, just let them know. That was my opening. I decided to ask them some simple questions about the background of my character, questions that I felt were pertinent to the plot. Question number one: Where is my father? The exec answered, "Well, he left when you were younger." Of course. Okay. Okay. Question number two: In this script, it alluded to my mother not being equipped to operate as a good parent, so why exactly did my little brother and I have to go into foster care?

Matter-of-factly, he said, "Well, of course she is on heroin".

That could be real, I guess, but I didn't want to assume that's what it was. If we are around here assuming that the black characters in the show are criminals, on drugs and deadbeat parents, then that would probably be stereotypical, wouldn't it? That word stereotypical lingered. One of the execs pulled out my resume and began studying it. The other exec was now trying to live up to what they had promised me only

a few moments before, "If there is anything you need, just let us know". She said, "As you have seen, things

move really fast around here, but we are more than happy to connect you with the writers if you have suggestions". "Yeah", I said that. "That would be great". I said, because I'm just trying to do my homework

on this. I didn't know if you guys have decided on all the facts, but maybe there are some things we could come up with, some talent or gift that we can build. Maybe he is really good at math or something. He has to be active. I'm doing my best not to play this character like a victim.

"So you went to Howard University, huh?" The exec holding my resume interrupted, peeking over the pages.

"Yes". I said proudly. He slid my resume back in his desk and said, "Thank you for your concerns. We will be

watching you". I left the office. I shot the episode I had come in to shoot on that day. Probably the best one I

did out of the three because I got one was bothering me off my chest. I was let go from that job on the next

day. A phone call from my agent, they decided to go another way. The questions that I asked set the producers on guard and perhaps paved the way for less stereotypical portrayal for the black actor that stepped into the role after me.

As the scripture says, "I planted the seed and Apollos watered it, but God kept it growing". God kept it growing. Yet and still, when you invest in a seed, watching it grow without you, that is a bitter pill to swallow, a bitter pill. Anybody that has ever been fired knows what I'm talking about. Even if you really don't

want the job, when they let you go, it's like any break up, you act like you don't care. I didn't need that damn job anyway. I didn't need them. But when you have those moments alone, you start to wonder if there was a better way to handle it. If you could have handled it better maybe you could help your family. Then before you know it, you are broke. You find yourself scraping together change just so you can ride the

subway so that you could get the next job. May be if you could book something else that would eclipse the

feeling of doubt that's building, but it seems like you can't pay them to hire you now My agents at the time told me it might be a while before I got a job acting on screen again. Well, that was

fine because I never wanted to act in the first place. And I definitely didn't want to be caught dead going after a fake Hollywood pipe dream. I'm more of a writer, director anyway, so forget their stories. I can tell my own stories. But am I actually black balled. We are hesitant about sending you out to some people right

now because there is a stigma that you are difficult. As conflicted as I was before I lost the job, as adamant

as I was about the need to speak truth to power, I found myself even more conflicted afterwards. I stand here today knowing that my Howard University education prepared me to play Jackie Robinson, James Brown, Thurgood Marshall and T'Challa.

But what do you do when the principle and the standards that were instilled in you here at Howard closed the doors in front of you. Sometimes you need to get knocked down before you can really figure out what your fight is and how need to fight it. At some point, my mind reverted back to my experiences here, to the

professors that challenged me and struggled against me, Professor Robert Williams, Doctor Singleton, George Epstein, to name a few, the ones that will fail you out of the goodness of their hearts. This may be hard to grasp for some of you right now, but I even considered President Swygert and how negotiating with

him was practice for a world that was considerably more cruel and unforgiving than any debate here, one that had no interest in my ideals and beliefs. How would I maneuver through all of this?

Finally, I thought of Ali in the middle of the yard in his elder years, drawing from his victories and his losses.

At that moment I realized something new about the greatness of Ali and how he carried his crown. I realized

that he was transferring something to me on that day. He was transferring the spirit of the fighter in me. He

was transferring the spirit of the fighter to me. He was transferring the spirit of the fighter to me. Sometimes you need to feel the pain and sting of defeat to activate the real passion and purpose that God predestined inside of you. God says in Jeremiah, "I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and

not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future".

Graduating class, hear me well on this day. This day, when you have reached the hill top and you are deciding on next jobs, next steps, careers, further education, you would rather find purpose than a job or career. Purpose crosses disciplines. Purpose is an essential element of you. It is the reason you are on the planet at this particular time in history. Your very existence is wrapped up in the things you are here to fulfill. Whatever you choose for a career path, remember, the struggles along the way are only meant to shape you for your purpose. When I dared to challenge the system that would relegate us to victims and stereotypes with no clear historical backgrounds, no hopes or talents, when I questioned that method of portrayal, a different path opened up for me, the path to my destiny.

When God has something for you, it doesn't matter who stands against it. God will move someone that's holding you back away from the door and put someone there who will open it for you if it's meant for you. I don't know what your future is, but if you are willing to take the harder way, the more complicated one, the one with more failures at first than successes, the one that has ultimately proven to have more meaning,

more victory, more glory then you will not regret it. Now, this is your time. The light of new realizations shines on you today. Howard's legacy is not wrapped up in the money that you will make, but the challenges

that you choose to confront. As you commence to your paths, press on with pride and press on with purpose. God bless you. I love you, Howard. Howard forever!

Jennifer Anniston

Find Your Voice



Thank you Awkwafina, for taking that beautiful bullet for all of us, and thank God I wrote my speech down. Hi! Ellen, we got to keep the best friend stuff going on the deal okay, because a lot of my best friends are here.

Okay, I mean, you would think after 30 years of being in this industry, getting up here would be easy, and it's not. It's terrifying. It's not that often we're surrounded by people who found their voice and are using it, and using it to hold people up and bring people together and that to me is true power.

I mean, it's funny because I've never, you know, I've never actually thought about myself as powerful. I mean, strong? Yes, but powerful, not mm-hmm. It's a distinction I've actually been thinking a lot about lately because the word power and its counterpart, abuse of power keep coming up in light of what is happening in our country and in our industry, a rebalancing of the scales, I guess you could say. I've been thinking about my own relationship with that word, with the word power, which got me thinking about my early associations, from my early associations with my own sense of power. It is something I believe comes from using our voice. And I remembered a parental figure saying to me around the rather critical age of about 11. After a dinner party that I was excused from the table because I didn't have anything interesting to add to the conversation.

Ouch, and it's stuck with me like painfully worded sentences can, and if I'm being honest, and I'm being honest because I'm 58 and, you know, that comes with the territory. That's right, so I carried that sentence with me into adulthood. I always felt incredibly comfortable giving you know a voice to the words of others but put me at a dinner table with strangers or at a podium like this, and I go right back to being 11 years old.

The last two years have made me think a lot about the messages that we send young kids, little girls, especially how the things that we say and do can either build them up, or it can tear them down and make them feel like maybe their voices don't matter. And it wasn't until *Friends* took off that I started seeing myself in a different light. I started meeting all of these people who expressed to me how much the show meant to them, how it lifted their spirits during a bad breakup or got them through an illness, and I was just so incredibly moved by that. I began to change the way I thought about my own voice and

what it meant to have a platform to use it. Still no prompter.

And then enter Marlo Thomas. Marlo Thomas, as some of you might remember, she was my mama on friends, and I remember one day we were on set, and she said to me I'm going to this St. Jude Gala tonight would you like to be my date. I said yeah, I'd love to be your date and go to that so there we are at this big elaborate gala there's tuxes and gowns and tiny little food on toothpicks that you can't eat in any dignified manner.

I sat down at the table, and they started to roll this tape of the hospital, and I sat there watching it moved to tears, and that was it for me. I wanted to be a part of this extraordinary organization, and that was 25 years ago. I am very honored to be a part of St. Jude, and I've been in love with him ever since.

And right around this time every fall, we shoot the PSA for a holiday PSA, and I get to spend a day with a family of St. Jude, and I always say it's the best day of the year and the hardest day of the year, and a few years back, I met a little girl named Sawyer, who I still think about to this day. She was seven at the time, and I remember she had this little pink dress on in these big angelic eyeballs. The chemo had taken all of her hair. She had these tiny little tumors on her body that she called her bumps, her alleys. She just sat on my lap and smiling and cuddling with me the whole time as we ran through the script again and again and again. After hearing this word, at the end of the day, after hearing the word repeated over and over again, she looked up at me with this, those big blue eyeballs, and she asked me what is cancer?

I just looked at her, and I was like, "Oh god, I'm not equipped to answer this question: birds and the bees." Oh, you're too young for that, but so I never... sorry, but seriously I never forgot about that moment here was this little girl who was fighting this deadly disease every single day. She didn't even know what the word was for it, and it was just part of her reality. She was just making the absolute best of it, and that's what's unbelievable about these children despite everything that they are up against and as much pain as they are often in they are vibrant, they're joyful they are fearless, and that's part of the magic of St. Jude and why I'm so honored to support their work because they are giving children the best care on the planet so that they can reclaim their childhood so that they can find their little inner superhero. They're doing it at no cost so that the families can focus on their little ones live without worrying about crippling hospital bills and their pioneering treatment cutting-edge treatments that will soon one day find a cure.

And that is what every child deserves to know that they are seen, they are powerful, and they are loved and that they deserve a seat at the table and that anything they have to say or any question they have to ask is of value even if we don't have all the answers for it. So, thank you very much for recognizing the work of this remarkable organization and for celebrating the power in each and every one of us.

Thank you.

Jennifer Lawrence

Anti-corruption



We are witnessing a total political system failure in America. If you're anything like me you may find yourself constantly overwhelmed by everything that's wrong with politics. And when I say politics I'm not

talking about Democrats or Republicans. I'm talking about the flaws that exist in our political system regardless of which party is in power. And I know, it's hard to talk about politics these days, but look:

The

government is ours. We pay for it, so it needs to work for us. And right now it doesn't. And I mean it really doesn't.

So, what's going on here? Is it Russian meddling and social media? Is it him? Is it her? No. Those two were

the least popular presidential candidates since they began keeping track of such things. Only 4% of Americans have a great deal of confidence in Congress now. Just 4%. America is no longer even considered a full democracy. We are witnessing total political system failure in America. Which is the complete opposite of what our nation's founders had in mind.

So I'm going to show you three lines that show what's causing this failure, how we can fix it, and what you

can do about it. So, here's your first line. What I want you to do is take any issue you really care about and

picture it on this line. This line comes from a Princeton University study that shows how public opinion influences the laws that Congress does or doesn't pass. They looked at eighteen-hundred public opinion polls over a twenty-year period, and we took their data and plotted it in this chart. See this horizontal line? That shows public support for a law amongst average Americans. This vertical line? That shows the likelihood of the public support leading to the passage of a law. When you plot it for the average

American, you get a line that looks like this.

There's your issue sitting on that line. If there is zero support for a law, there's about a 30% chance that Congress is going to pass it. And if there's 100% support for something, the most popular thing ever, there's still a 30% chance that Congress is gonna pass it. So the line is horizontal because no matter how much support there is among average Americans, there's still a 30% chance that Congress is gonna pass that law. Princeton determined that the “preferences of the average American appear to have only a minuscule,

near-zero, statistically non-significant impact on public policy.” How in the hell does this happen?

Consider this. Politicians are spending up to 70% of their time raising funds for re-election after they get into office. Why? Because in order to win a seat in the Senate in some races, you would have to raise \$45,000 every single day, 365 days a year for 6 years to raise enough money to win.

Now consider that only .05% of Americans give more than \$10,000 to politics, and then you see why politicians have become completely dependent on that .05% of Americans (billionaires and special interest groups!) who fund their campaigns. Meanwhile, you've got lobbyists writing our laws and donating to the politicians who pass them, we have a two-party duopoly of Democrats and Republicans that makes it so that independents can't win, while the American people are leaving the major parties in droves.

As you can see here, nearly half of American voters are now registered independent. And then there's gerrymandering, with politicians drawing the boundaries of their own voting districts into crazy shapes designed to prevent competition.

Today only 14% of House campaigns are actually competitive. 86% of them are not. And we wonder why young people feel that their vote doesn't matter. I've covered a lot here, but it all adds up to this vast ring of influence over our elected leaders. It's a corrupt system in which “We the people” have “near zero” influence over our own government... And that.. is sad....

That is not the country I feel like I grew up in. But what's worse is that by allowing this to happen we are causing the failure of the most important issues facing our nation. We're wasting trillions of dollars a year on fraud and abuse in our own government. One in five American children live in poverty. Our healthcare is the most expensive in the world. We have more people in prison per capita than Russia and China. We're losing jobs to the rest of the world. And we're not even doing enough to keep our air and our water clean for our children. America was founded on the promise of self governance. But instead we have statistically non-significant impact on public policy.

So, first of all, the US Constitution gives states sole control over how elections are run — even federal elections — so when we fix gerrymandering or election laws, that fixes the federal election in each state. That means that by going state-by-state, we have an immediate impact on how we elect Congress and how we hold them accountable. But there's more... and that brings us to our second line.

This line is from a Bloomberg News study. It finds that throughout American history, passing state laws leads to federal victory. Let me show you what I mean. This chart shows the number of states over time that passed laws giving women the right to vote. When it hits the right side of the chart, that's the federal victory. Okay, now I want you to watch the blue line. We're gonna do this again with interracial marriage. There were a few states in the Northeast that made it legal, decades ago, and centuries go by and we hit this blue line where all of a sudden there's a rush of activity, which leads pretty quickly to federal passage. So here we are again, with same-sex marriage. One state, Massachusetts, for many years. A couple decades later we hit that blue line: a jump in state activity and federal passage. This isn't about these issues. This is about a winning political strategy. The crucial finding in the Bloomberg study is that a “key

event, often a court decision or a grassroots campaign reaching maturity, triggers a rush of state activity that ultimately leads to a change in federal law.” So, fixing this problem IS possible. But how do we

create our trigger moment for this issue? Well, the “Grassroots Campaign” from the study? That’s RepresentUs. We’re bringing conservatives and progressives together to pass Anti-Corruption laws all across America, using three strategic innovations: right-left coalitions, calling out corruption and building a movement. A big movement. And I’m gonna break them down for you.

Can I do this part? No.

First, right-left. This is how people self-identify in America. This isn’t party identification, this is how you feel politically. And as you can see, its 25% liberal, 36% conservative, and 34% moderate. But for the past

40 years, on the reforms I’ve outlined, it’s liberals speaking to liberals, using liberal language, with liberal messengers.... Liberal.... I just had to say that one more time. And you’re just not gonna change the political power structure of America with 25% of the people. Fixing corruption requires that we enlist all Americans, liberals, conservatives, and moderates who, as we’ve shown, overwhelmingly support reform. Number two, corruption. When we talk about money in politics, gerrymandering, democracy, campaign finance reform... most people just tune out, but people are fired up about corruption.

And number three, we must build a movement. A big movement comprised of all kinds of people from all across America, fighting to pass anti-corruption laws, and then make sure they are implemented and protected.

So again, liberals and conservatives working together, corruption, and build a movement. This is the foundation of RepresentUs. We believe the government should work for every American, not just a handful of billionaires and special-interests. But it’s not just an idea. In a few years, we’ve already racked up 85 wins all across the country. And if we can get those 85 wins to 850 wins, we can fix our corrupt political system, save America, and get to work on fixing everything else that’s broken in our country.

This

is how we build this movement big enough to trigger that “rush of state activity that leads to a change in federal law....”

And that brings us to our last line. Right now this is you and right now these are all of the ways that you can help us go state-by-state, city-by-city to fix the corruption in American politics. Volunteer and join a RepresentUs Chapter — or if that’s not your thing, join the Common Wealth to make a monthly donation in support of someone who does volunteer. 100% of your money goes straight to passing these laws. Not to overhead or our expenses. Every voice matters. Your voice matters. If you do nothing, nothing changes. But if we all do a little. We can win, together. So the only question left is this... Will you cross that line? Join us at www.Represent.Us

Kate Perry

People Can Change



Thank you, guys. A little back story. Shannon Woodward, one of my best friends ... A lot of my best friends

are here tonight because I love them and I'm obsessed with them, and I'm loyal. They've taught me pretty much everything I know. Shannon, actually, I used to sleep on her couch. I was couch-surfing on her couch

and I used to eat her frozen chicken tenders from Trader Joe's. They were so good.

Here is the thing about that woman, we've kind of like raised each other. I'll get into it in a second, but basically one time, I said, "I'm not a feminist because I don't grow hair underneath my arms," and stuff like

that because I really didn't understand what that meant. She lovingly pulled me aside as the strong woman she is and great friend, and those are great friends, and she goes, "Hey, this is what the word 'feminist' means."

I was like, "What? This whole time? I'm a feminist."

I love her so very much and I love all my friends that teach me everything that I've learned today so thank you so much for this incredible, humbling award. I got to say there is no other community that has done more to shape who I am today, and there is no other community that I believe in more than you.

This community here tonight has achieved more progress toward a more perfect union in a short amount of

time as any group in our history. I stand with you and I know that we stand together against discrimination

whether it be in the LGBTQ community, or our Latino brothers and sisters, or the millions of Muslims in this

country.

I'm just a singer-songwriter, honestly. I speak my truths and I paint my fantasies into these little bite-size

pop songs. For instance, I kissed a girl and I liked it. Truth be told: (a) I did more than that and ... (b) how was

I going to reconcile that with a gospel singing girl raised in youth groups that were pro-conversion camps?

What I did know is that I was curious and even then I knew sexuality wasn't as black and white as this dress.

Honestly, I haven't always gotten it right, but in 2008, when that song came out, I knew that I started a conversation that a lot of the world seemed curious enough to sing along to.

Let's take a trip down memory lane for one second. My first words were mama and dada, God and Satan. Right and wrong were taught to me on felt boards and of course through the glamorous Jan Crouch crying diamond teardrops every night on that Vaseline-TBN television screen. Make some noise if you know who

I'm talking about. When I was growing up, homosexuality was synonymous with the word abomination and hell, a place of

gnashing of teeth, continuous burning of skin and probably Mike Pence's ultimate guest list for a barbecue.

No way, no way! I wanted the pearly gates and the unlimited fro-yo toppings. Most of my unconscious adolescence, I prayed the gay away at my Jesus camps, but then in the middle of it all, in a twist of events, I

found my gift and my gift introduced me to people outside my bubble and my bubble started to burst.

These people were nothing like who I had been taught to fear. They were the most free, strong, kind and inclusive people I have ever met. They stimulated my mind and they filled my heart with joy and they freaking danced all the while doing it. These people are actually magic and they are magic because they are

living their truth. Oh my goddess, what a revelation ... and not the last chapter of the bible. Suffice to say, it's been a long road for me and I'm sure a long road for many of you out there.

I know it doesn't always feel safe to live out who you are, but here's the thing though, I would have not chosen a different road. Priceless lessons have been learned. The path of discovery has made me, has tested

me and forever changed me. You don't get to choose your family, but you can choose your tribe. Many of the people I admire and trust, and work with belong to the LGBTQ community. Without them, I'd be half of

the person I am today. My life is rich in every capacity because of them.

They are trusted allies that provide a safe space to fall, to not know it all and to make mistakes. These are the people I hold dear. See, I hope I stand here as real evidence for all that no matter where you came from,

it's about where you are going and that real change, real evolution and real perception shift can happen if we open our minds and soften our hearts. People can change. Believe me, it would have been easier just to

stay the whipped cream tit, spring, poppy, light, fluffy, fun, anthems by the way of animal totem singing girl

who was basically somewhat neutralist in a stance and just thought more hugs could save the world.

No way. No longer can I sit in silence. I have to stand for what I know is true and that is equality and justice

for all, period.

That's why the HRC is so important and I am so grateful for them being on the front lines every day from civil union legislation, to repealing 'don't ask, don't tell', to getting rid of DOMA at the Supreme Court

which paved the way for marriage equality across the country and continuing to fight for trans equality amongst all things.

I don't have to tell you that we have a lot more to do. We have to create a safe space for us to ask questions of ourselves and others and to keep the conversation going because the loudest voice in the room or on your TV set isn't always right, but that little voice inside of you, pushing you to discover who you are is a trusted friend.

None of us have the answers, or all of them at least, but it's time to lead with empathy and grace and compassion now more than ever to find the unity we need now.

I'll never cease to be a champion, an ally, a spotlight and a loving voice for all LGBTQ identifying people. Whatever your sexuality, your gender, your preferred pronouns, blossom to be, we all know it ain't so black

and white and I will continue to champion the people that have been a champion for me.

Many friends and loved ones from the LGBTQ family have raised me into the woman I am today and I want

to dedicate this award to one of my greatest champions of my life, my manager, Bradford Elton Cobb III. I think it's almost, like, 15 years because he believed in me before it all. Secretly paying my rent for years and bringing me leftovers from hamburger [inaudible 00:09:36]. He really did! I know we really connected

on a soul level though because we came from the same upbringing where it was difficult to be our authentic

selves. We had similar struggles breaking out of our suppressive shelves but we kept inspiring each other, challenging each other and retiring our past frame of mind.

We broke the cycle and now we're living our best most authentic lives. I love you, B. Cobb. There will be obstacles, but we all know everything good takes work, but we can't let our past get in the way of our brilliant future.

These days, I get an incomparable high from finally knowing myself and it feels more real than any story I

was ever told on a felt board. It feels sparkly as fuck. Truth be told, I think a lot of that has to do with the magic that has rubbed off on me from all of you.

Thank you so much.

Kristen Bell

Build Your Tribe



Hello, good morning, class of 2019. Thank you so much for having me. It is an incredible honor to stand here

before you today. Thank you to the faculty, to the guests, the families, and to all the gorgeous students among us who are beyond the shadow of a doubt, nursing, raging hangovers and praying that this Disney princess keeps the let it go. Metaphors to a minimum. So, I see you.

I got you.

I want to start today by sharing a secret about myself that you might not know. I did not graduate from college.

Dean is in a full flop sweat thinking. Oh my God, nobody double-checked. I had a feeling when I saw her outfit because no one with a respectable degree would wear hoops of that size. Who let her in here. But that leads me to another thing about me, which is, um, I'm nice. And as it turns out, when you are nice, people tend to overlook a lot.

In some cases, this could include experience, credentials, not having your driver's license at airport security.

And yes, that's a true story twice. And you might say, Kristen, no, that's not a result to being nice. That's the

result and the privilege of being a recognizable person, and okay, that may be true, but I will counter with my husband who is also highly recognizable and doesn't get away with anything. Literally 10 out of 10

times he is getting a pat-down at TSA, and that's because he's just not as nice as me. Don't get me wrong. I love him; I love him. He's brilliant; he's hilarious. He's, literally, my favorite person, but he's even nicest person.

I don't know guys. I just don't know, and I tell you this at the risk of divorce because I can't offer you the tricks of how to wield your shining diploma to ensure success. I can't tell you the answer to the age-old actor's dilemma. Should I move to New York? Should I stay in LA? And for goodness sakes, I cannot tell you

what a Magna Carta is or what it even does. I literally don't know. I don't have to answer any of those questions. And let me tell you a secret. Nobody has the answer to those questions. My soul trick to share

with you is when you listen, when you really listen to people, when you listen as fiercely as you want to be

heard, when you respect the idea that you are sharing the earth with other humans, when you lead with your nice foot forward, you'll win every time. It might not be today, it might not be tomorrow, but it comes

back to you when you need it. We live in an age of instant gratification, of immediate likes and it is uncomfortable to have to wait to see the dividends of your kindness, but I promise you it will appear exactly

when you need it. It will appear at the precise moment when you pass gas in an elevator, and everyone blames your husband instead of you. That is when the boomerang of kindness hits you back. It's also a very true story. Numerous times over,

though it wouldn't be fair if I just waxed on about kindness and I didn't also include its inevitable downside

it's relevant to know that sometimes when you choose nice, it does come with a price tag. Being nice sometimes means avoiding the obvious joke. Like for instance, I'm me, and I've chosen this path, this speech

to be nice at an institution like this. I am choosing not to reference aunt Becky in any way shape.

Thank you.

In fact, I'm so nice. I'm not even going to mention my actual aunt, Becky for fear. It is simply too close to the

fire and let me be real. Removing those jokes is a bit of a sacrifice but, but dare I say prioritizing your emotional intelligence over your logical intelligence can at times feel like a compromise but it does pay off.

You were right to pay off not. It was not the best choice of words for this particular.

I'm not; I'm not perfect. I'm not, I'm not perfect, but I am trying, and you know what I should have led with

that. I am by no means perfect. I am also not telling you what to do. I mean, my second child is the result of

unprotected makeup, sex in a hot tub in the Hawaiian islands. I am in no position to give advice.

Hand to God. I can't do it. All I can do is share my experience with you. My husband always says, if you see

someone who has what you want, ask them how they got it. Unfortunately, Beyonce has yet to reply to my

emails, so I don't have all the answers yet, but she will like, don't worry. She's definitely going to, so I'm pretty sure I say this because if there is anything about my life that seems even slightly aspirational, hopefully, some of this will be helpful to you. And if not, feel free to slowly pull the flask hiding in your underwear out and just have it. I'm not your mom. You know what I mean? It's if it's not hurting anyone, great. Get yours, and you know what, maybe share some with your neighbors. Now the tricky thing about finding someone who has what you want is it; you also have to know what you want.

Right? So that seems simple enough, but it's actually very hard because our brains are arrogant assholes.

The brain thinks it's running the show, but the heart is secretly pulling strings. It's very true. Our brains are

the King Joffrey of our bodies, and our hearts are the granny Tyrell, right? Very true. We think we know what we want, but we often have no idea what we need, and because of that, we often approach life with one goal, and we end up finding our real purpose along the way. When I left New York, and I came to LA, I

had the singular goal of becoming the lead on a TV show. I had gained some experience in New York,

playing

a naive weed, obsessed sexpot, and reefer madness. I thought, perfect, I'm ready for Los Angeles. Surely I will be embraced immediately. So I hopped on a plane.

I arrived in the land where the streets are soaked in sunshine and self-tanner residue. I had the confidence of an overserved freshmen at a frat party. I was like, here I am, and I began the process of auditioning, which it's really just a condensed way to say driving back and forth to Santa Monica in rush hour traffic, but

the feedback that I received was that I was always either too young, too old, too cute, too plain, too smart, too ditzy. It was as if goldilocks were every casting director and I just couldn't nail it, and eventually, I started

booking some costar and guest star roles, but my coveted lead alluded me, and I would go to bed negotiating with the universe. I would say, okay, if I could just book the lead on CIS and CIS: Miami, I promise I will decrease my carbon footprint by at least six in the next calendar year.

So clearly I know absolutely nothing about the measure of carbon. I find it almost as confusing as the concept of the Magna Carta, but then it happened. I was cast on Veronica Mars, which was my first show, and everything I ever wanted was in front of me. I was earning a real paycheck. I was the lead of a TV show. I

owed the universe all my carbon. But once we started shooting, something very unexpected happened to me. Well, two unexpected things. The first was Ryan Hansen who played Dick Casablanca's, his hair. It was

the exact, almost too accurate to one point shade of surfer bond blonde boy. It was like the kind that gives you PTSD from walking along. Then a speech that you're just like, whoa. It was terrifying, and I loved it. The

second was that despite the recognition of my dream, I wasn't happy like at all. My arrogant little ass whole

brain could not comprehend what was happening.

I was like, how was this possible? This is what I wanted and what I needed, right? And yet I had it all, and I

was lonelier than I had ever been. And it wasn't until the boy with the surfer's hair invited me to his birthday

party after hours offset away from work that everything changed. He wasn't just inviting me to his birthday

party. He was inviting me to his life party, to his community, and I finally felt at home, and I made some of

the best friends that I still have to this day. It in retrospect, I know it wasn't the role I was looking for. It wasn't a paycheck or a titular character. I, what I really needed was friendship. So I want to stress to you, build your tribe. They will keep you alive. I'm also pretty sure that's what Beyonce would say.

Speaking of pillars of an American entertainment, uh, it is now the portion of the morning where I remind everyone that life is 50 shades of gray. I have to assume I'm the first speaker in an academic institution that

has referenced the book 50 shades of gray. But we have already established that I dropped out of college. I

have no right to be here. So this is where we arrived. I don't know what you want me to do in my, in my life,

there was only one concept that I have determined. It's that everything is gray. Every person, every question, every tragedy, even every victory, they all have nuance. Pay attention to the nuance. You all in

this
room, I feel like know that better than anyone. You know it in your bones because you've devoted your
time
to building stories, building people. It's what you do.
You are people architects. You read a script, and you construct a walking, breathing human from the
ground
up. When we create characters, we are encouraged to make them three-dimensional, right? And acting
two-dimensional characters they are at the least boring and at the most extreme irresponsible. We're told
to embrace complicated characters. We are taught that you can't accurately play a villain until you find
one
thing about him that you love. One of my favorite producers has a poster over his desk that reads what
does
the villain want? Because in art, we recognize all characters start with an empathetic motivation on stage.
We prioritize listening because we know the livelihood of the show relies on it. We are good at
remembering those things when we make art, but in our daily lives, we tend to forget when we shift from
the stage to reality nuance seems to get lost in the shuffle in real life.
We don't look for the one thing we love about each person. Complicated characters get cast out, and we
view things two dimensionally. It's also becoming increasingly apparent. We're not listening to each
other.
Even though like on stage, the livelihood of this entire grand show relies on it. The great news is we can
all
choose, right? When hard moments arise. You can lean on the experience you've gleaned in these past
four
years, and you can choose the nuance. You can choose complexity over simplicity. You can listen to
others
with open ears as if your next move depends on it. You can Sandy Meisner your life. So, class of 2019 as
you move your tassel from the left to the right and officially take the steps forward toward your forever, I
encourage you, take them with your nice foot. And if you take away one thing from this, remember what I
said earlier. If it's not hurting anyone, great get yours and maybe share some with your neighbor. Thank
you, and congratulations.

Lady Gaga

Mental Health and Self-Care



OPRAH: Thanks for coming. I was saying to reporters yesterday, I was really nervous about asking you. First of all, because I—it's one of those things— I was. So nervous about asking you.

LADY GAGA: And then you asked me and I was, like, move my vacation. I'd do anything for Oprah.

OPRAH: I want to know when you got clarity for yourself about the vision of creating Gaga.

LADY GAGA: Well, you know, at first when I was younger, I went through a lot of struggles in high school. I

was really bullied. I didn't feel good about myself. And I got made fun of. Like why do you want to be a singer? Why do you want to be a musician? Why do you want to be an actress? And I felt so secluded and isolated. And it was time, once I dropped out of college, I will admit—stay in school—but I dropped out of

college because I was, like, I have to pursue my dreams as a musician. This is what I want. And it was in creating Gaga, that I was able to create a superhero for myself. It was a vision for the me that I wanted to be. I wanted to be confident. I wanted to be filled with self-compassion. I wanted to be filled with compassion for others. And I wanted to share my story and my vision of the world with the world.

OPRAH: And so you created this sort of alter person, Gaga.

LADY GAGA: Who now has become me also. I don't know what happened but it sort of—but that's what happens when you have a vision for yourself, you can be here, right? And then you have your vision. And then all of a sudden.

OPRAH: The two merge.

LADY GAGA: They come together.

OPRAH: You become aligned. And you say Lady Gaga, the creation of Gaga actually gave Stefani the wings to fly.

LADY GAGA: Gaga, myself, has given me the wings to fly. And what I was going to, you know, add is that

now, after almost over a decade of being in the industry, I recognize my position that people are watching

me. Now, I could hyper-focus on being objectified or being in tabloids or being gossiped about, but you know what? I'm thinking to myself, oh, the world is watching. And I have something important to say.

And

I want to change people's lives. And now my mission is different. And I have a responsibility to this whole world.

OPRAH: Yes. Because one of the things that we discussed in Elle, one of the things that surprised me when we talked about it in the recent Elle magazine, you were saying—I was saying you have spent a lot of time shocking the world. That meat dress was the first time we all, like, were kind of aghast. And you said you have now reached a point in your life where you don't feel the need to create some identity of shocker—shocking people.

LADY GAGA: Yes. I think it was something that I enjoyed to bemuse people so they would listen to the music and there was sort of a state of confusion of who is this woman? I don't really—I'm, like—it's kind of like, you know, watching a train wreck. You know? But the truth is that that was part of my art form was, how do I get people to see and watch and listen and become engaged with me on a personal level? Even though it felt quite superficial I think for a lot of people. And it's changed since then because, number one, it's no longer shocking to have pink hair. And number two, I think the most shocking thing that I could possibly do is be completely vulnerable and honest with you about my life, how—what I've been through, the struggles that I've seen that I have also been a part of, and share that with the world so that I can help other people who are suffering. And one of those things that I deeply care about is mental health.

OPRAH: So someone had asked you what do you see when you look at that Oscar, and you say you see a lot of pain. And is that because of the hard work? Or is that because of the actual physical mental pain that you had to go through up until that moment to get it?

LADY GAGA: Well, it's not a huge secret, but some of you might not know in the audience tonight or who's watching, but I struggle with mental health issues. And I struggle also with chronic pain. Some call it

fibromyalgia. Or neuropathic pain.

OPRAH: What does that mean, fibromyalgia? What does that mean?

LADY GAGA: That is a very big question, Oprah. So fibromyalgia is essentially a chronic pain condition that

makes your body hurt through your brain. Now, someone that might be watching this that has it might be saying, don't tell me that my fibromyalgia is in my head because my whole body hurts. And even sitting here with you today, I'm in head-to-toe pain. But what's interesting about it is that I've found through neuropsych research and my relationship with my doctors that fibromyalgia can be treated through mental health therapy. And mental health is a medical condition. It should be treated as a medical condition. It should not be ignored. And I—

OPRAH: So twice you've said you have mental health issues. What does that mean for you? Because as I was sharing with you on the phone, I have a girls' school with girls who have come from traumatic backgrounds. And I didn't know, until I started this school, because I had this idea that I'm gonna create this school and everybody's gonna come and they're gonna get an education and they're gonna go out in the world and everything's gonna be fabulous. I had no idea the impact that trauma has on your mental health. LADY GAGA: Well, I've shared this with you, and I will share it again, very vulnerably with all of you. I could

object my book and read it, but I'll just tell you. So I was raped repeatedly when I was 19 years old. And I also developed PTSD.

OPRAH: As a result of the rape?

LADY GAGA: As a result of being raped. And also not processing that trauma. I did not have anyone help

me. I did not have a therapist. I did not have a psychiatrist. I did not have a doctor help me through it. I just all of a sudden became a star and was traveling the world going from hotel room to garage to limo to stage. And I never dealt with it. And then all of a sudden, I started to experience this incredible, intense pain throughout my entire body that mimicked, actually, the illness that I felt after I was raped. So what that is called...

OPRAH: Were you raped by someone you knew?

LADY GAGA: I was raped by someone that I knew. Repeatedly. And it was a trauma response. So when you asked me about what fibromyalgia is, what I would like for you to know, and to shine a light on, is that many people don't know what it is. And we need to all get together and figure this out. And this is how we're gonna do it. There's the neuropsych aspect. There's also an immunity aspect that where there is a possibility that the immune system has something to do with fibromyalgia or trauma response or neuropathic pain. Whatever you want to call it. And there's also some similarity in my condition to autoimmune diseases. But fibromyalgia is not an autoimmune disease. So what I take an oath, as a commitment today, with you, is it's 2020. And for the next decade, and maybe longer, I'm going to get the smartest scientists, doctors, psychiatrists, mathematicians, researchers, and professors in the same room together and we are going to go through each problem, one by one, and we are going to solve this mental health crisis.

OPRAH: You know what I found interesting, you became famous really quickly, even though there had been so much work put into getting to the point where we then knew you and you became famous. And you made the decision, or have made the decision that you're not interested in just fame but you're also looking for impact.

LADY GAGA: I want impact. I always did. I thought it was just through music at one point. I had some dreams of being an actress. And then it really was a spiritual awakening for me. I mean, I consider myself a spiritual, religious woman. I don't go to church every Sunday. But I do pray every day. I prayed, like, eight times before I came out here with you. I was, like, God, just tell me what to say. And the truth is that

once I became famous, I thought to myself, well, I can—I will, and I want to continue making music, I will

and want to continue being in movies, but I want to help people. These people that come to my shows, I don't want to just take your money and sing for you. I want to help change your life. And I have all this life

experience. And I can't—you know, when I talk to God, right? And you know whatever you want to call it

for yourself. If it's God or the other realm or your angels or...

OPRAH: By any name.

LADY GAGA: By any name.

OPRAH: It responds.

LADY GAGA: Any gender. Right? It responds. When I talk to God, I say, tell me what to do. Because I'm

being watched. And I want to do the right thing here. So tell me what to say. Tell me how to say it. And help me see the path. And if you show me that path, I will walk down it. And do you know what, Oprah? Look where that path has led me. I am sitting right next to you.

OPRAH: Ah. Every time. Ask and you shall be given. What has been your greatest spiritual awakening? Greatest spiritual awakening.

LADY GAGA: I think my greatest spiritual awakening actually has been quite recent. I think it's that I realize

that I have the chronic pain that I have for a reason. And I don't mean to be, like, God gave it to me. You know? And I also don't believe in that, like, karma thing where you're sick because you did something bad. But I do believe that this was—this happened for a reason. All the things I've been through, I think they were supposed to happen. I was supposed to go through this.

OPRAH: Even the rape.

LADY GAGA: Even the rape. All of it. I think I was supposed to go through all of these things. I radically

accept that they happened. And I think it happened because God was saying to me, I'm going to show you pain. And then you're gonna help other people who are in pain, because you're gonna understand it.

OPRAH: Mm. Because you can't—you can't give what you don't have.

LADY GAGA: I can't look away. Because now when I see someone in pain, I can't look away because I go,

no. You're in pain. I'm in pain, too. And then now, I'm in problem-solving mode. I've got my suit on and my heels and I'm ready to go.

OPRAH: Yes. So this wisdom came from this pain. What has been the lesson that's actually taken you the longest to learn?

LADY GAGA: How to be wise. See, there is the rational mind. And there is the emotional mind. And I think

from day to day, we all experience ourselves, if we're mindful, in some type of way, which I think this is good to be mindful about, is am I operating from an emotional space today? Or from a rational space today? Meaning, when I say rational, I mean cerebral. Like intelligence. Thoughts. Facts. You know, just really pragmatic. And emotional meaning, like, am I operating from the heart? Am I really upset because my boyfriend broke up with me and I'm a mess, you know, and I'm just being completely irrational. Wise sits in the center. Wise is when you are both rational and emotional at the same time, and those two things meet and you become wise. And that was the lesson that I learned. I had to learn how to pull myself back from either place, and then sit in the center. Because actually, a psychotic break, and if you look in the brain, or its eye sort of a metaphor about the brain, you're centered in here. Right?

OPRAH: Because you had a psychotic break.

LADY GAGA: I had a psychotic break. I'll explain what happened. Here's my brain. Right? Here's my center.

Right? And then I was triggered, really badly, in a court deposition, and I just, like, this part of the brain where you stay centered and you don't disassociate, right? It went like this. It slammed down. And my whole body started tingling, and I started screaming.

OPRAH: Where were you?

LADY GAGA: I was in a hospital. And it's very—it's very difficult to describe what it feels like other than

that you first are completely tingling from head to toe, and then you go numb. But what is essentially happening is the brain goes, 'That's enough. I don't want to think about this anymore. I don't want to feel this anymore.' Boom.

OPRAH: You literally break from reality as we know it.

LADY GAGA: You break from reality as we know it. You have no concept of what's going on around you.

There is nothing wrong. But you are in a traumatic state that you feel like I remember going into the hospital and screaming, why is no one else panicking? Why aren't you panicking? And then they run a

psychiatrist in and then—and I'm in head-to-toe pain at the same time. Right? And they brought in a psychiatrist. And I said, can you get me a real doctor? And he was, like, hey, so nice to meet you. And he sat down. And I was, like, I need medicine. I don't feel well. I can't feel my legs, help me. Right? And then

he just said, I need you to explain to me what happened today. And I was so annoyed. But I'm telling you this story because even I who run Born This Way Foundation with my mother was irritated that they brought a psychiatrist in to help me. I mean, that's how, like, gone I was. I was so separated from the world. And once we started talking, he realized what had happened to me, and then he ordered medication for me that I took, reluctantly, at first, and then he became my psychiatrist and assembled a team for me, and I went away to a place that I go to sometimes still for, like, a reboot. And they took care of me and we got all of the things lined up. And I have a very unorthodox, actually, set of pills that I take. But they saved my life. And I'm very grateful.

OPRAH: So you use medication, but you also do many other things to keep yourself spiritually sound and centered.

LADY GAGA: Yes. So I meditate. I do transcendental meditation. It's—it's great. Bob Roth taught me.

OPRAH: Bob Roth taught me.

LADY GAGA: Isn't he great?

OPRAH: He's great.

LADY GAGA: Sorry.

OPRAH: Okay.

LADY GAGA: And so I do that. And when I slip up on it, you know it's not the best because it's like—it's better when I do. And sometimes I can be in a ton of pain and meditate and it goes away. It's amazing. I also work out every day. But I also listen to my body. So if I'm in a lot of pain and deep stress, I might not do either as hard of a workout or I might, you know, not work out at all. I do listen to my body and I listen

to what it's telling me. I do talk therapy. Dialectical behavioral therapy. And I also do lots of other things like opposite action, for example. So let's say you're feeling really depressed and you're at home and you've been at home for seven days straight and you just can't leave the house and you just—you practice opposite action. Someone invites you to go somewhere, or you reach out to a friend and you say, hey, you want to play a game of poker? Get up, get in your car, and go. Opposite action. That's something that I do all the time.

OPRAH: So you're actively working on yourself all the time.

LADY GAGA: All the time I actively work on myself. I have to. If I don't, I will sit and I will be in pain all day.

OPRAH: I would say gratitude is my religion. It's the thing I practice with, you know, deep consciousness and a sense of regularity and discipline about it. And for you, that is kindness.

LADY GAGA: It is kindness. Kindness heals the world. I said this with the Dalai Lama once. I said, the earth

is slowly rotting apple on the kitchen counter.

OPRAH: Oh, no.

LADY GAGA: It's the truth.

OPRAH: Okay.

LADY GAGA: I'm sorry. But it's just true. I mean, it's like—

OPRAH: The earth is a slowly rotting apple?

LADY GAGA: But it's slow. It's really slow. Right? But we have to be kind to that apple, to the humanity of

that apple, and we have to be kind to the environment to keep that apple alive as long as possible. And that's through kindness. And I have actually my commitment here.

OPRAH: I want to hear your commitment.

LADY GAGA: I commit to gratitude to bring the greatest minds I can find in the world together to one by one solve the mental health crisis that is plaguing our world. I want to create an epicenter of healing.

Because when I give to others, I give also back to myself.

OPRAH: Indeed. Lady Gaga. Gave up her vacation to come and sit and share her truth with us. Thank you.

LADY GAGA: Can I just say, Oprah, I love you.

OPRAH: I love you back, girl. I love you back.

Michael Jordan

Tribute to Kobe Bryant



I'm grateful to Vanessa and Bryan family for the opportunity to speak today. I'm grateful to be here to honor Gigi and celebrate the gifts that Kobe gave us all – what he accomplished as a basketball player, as a businessman, and a storyteller and as a father. In the game of basketball, in life, as a parent – Kobe left nothing in the tank. He left it all on the floor.

Maybe it surprised people that Kobe and I were very close friends. But we were very close friends. Kobe was my dear friend. He was like a little brother. Everyone always wanted to talk about the comparisons between he and I. I just wanted to talk about Kobe.

You know all of us have brothers and sisters, little brothers, little sisters, who for whatever reason always tend to get in your stuff, your closet, your shoes, everything. It was a nuisance – if I can say that word – but that nuisance turned into love over a period of time. Just because the admiration that they have for you as big brothers or big sisters, the questions in wanting to know every little detail about life that they were about to embark on.

He used to call me, text me, 11:30, 2:30, 3 o'clock in the morning, talking about post-up moves, footwork, and sometimes, the triangle. At first, it was an aggravation. But then it turned into a certain passion. This kid had passion like you would never know. It's an amazing thing about passion. If you love something, if you have a strong passion for something, you would go to the extreme to try to understand or try to get it. Either ice cream, Cokes, hamburgers, whatever you have a love for. If you have to walk, you would go get it. If you have to beg someone, you would go get it.

What Kobe Bryant was to me was the inspiration that someone truly cared about the way either I played the game or the way that he wanted to play the game. He wanted to be the best basketball player that he could be. And as I got to know him, I wanted to be the best big brother that I could be.

To do that, you have to put up with the aggravation, the late-night calls, or the dumb questions. I took great pride as I got to know Kobe Bryant that he was just trying to be a better person – a better basketball player. We talked about business, we talked about family, we talked about everything. And he was just

trying to be a better person. I remember maybe a couple months ago he sends me a text and he said, "I'm trying to teach my daughter

some moves. And I don't know what I was thinking or what I was working on, but what were you thinking

about when you were growing up trying to work on your moves?" I said "What age?" He says "12". I said "12, I was trying to play baseball." He sends me a text back saying "Laughing my ass off." And this is at

2

o'clock in the morning.

But the thing about him was we could talk about anything that related to basketball but we could talk about anything that related to life. And we, as we grew up in life, rarely have friends that we can have conversations like that. Well, it's even rarer when you can grow up against adversaries and have conversations like that.

I went and saw Phil Jackson in 1999, maybe 2000, I don't know, when Phil was here in L.A. And I walk in

and Kobe's sitting there.

And the first thing, Kobe said, "Did you bring your shoes?"

"No, I wasn't thinking about playing."

But his attitude to compete and play against someone he felt like he could enhance and improve his game, that's what I loved about the kid. I absolutely loved the kid. No matter where he saw me, it was a challenge. And I admired him because his passion, you rarely see someone who is looking and trying to improve each and every day, not just in sports, but as a parent, as a husband. I am inspired by what he's done, and what he's shared with Vanessa, and what he's shared with his kids.

I have a daughter who's 30 and I became a grandparent. And I have two twins. I have twins at 6. I can't wait to get home to become a GirlDad and to hug them and to see the love and smiles that they bring to us as parents. He taught me that just by looking at this tonight, looking at how he responded and reacted with the people he actually loved. These are the things that we will continue to learn from Kobe Bryant.

To Vanessa, Natalia, Bianka, Capri, my wife and I will keep you close in our hearts and our prayers. We will

always be here for you. Always. I also want to offer our condolences and support to all the families affected by this enormous tragedy.

Kobe gave every last ounce of himself to whatever he was doing. After basketball, he showed a creative side to himself that I didn't think any of us knew he had. In retirement, he seemed so happy. He found new passions. And he continued to give back, as a coach, in his community. More importantly, he was an amazing dad, amazing husband, who dedicated himself to his family and who loved his daughters with all his heart. Kobe never left anything on the court. And I think that's what he would want for us to do.

No one knows how much time we have. That's why we must live in the moment, we must enjoy the moment, we must reach and see and spend as much time as we can with our families and friends and the people that we absolutely love. To live in the moment means to enjoy each and every one that we come in contact with.

When Kobe Bryant died, a piece of me died. And as I look in this arena and across the globe, a piece of you died, or else you wouldn't be here. Those are the memories that we have to live with and we learn from. I promise you from this day forward, I will live with the memories of knowing that I had a little brother

and I tried to help in every way I could.

Please, rest in peace little brother.



Pharrell Williams

Don't be invisible

Hi everybody. I'd like to start by thanking President Andrew Hamilton, Trustees and the New York and the NYU students and the faculty for welcoming me into your halls last year and letting me have an experience that I honestly could have never imagined. And I want to thank all of you for this humbling experience today. This is major. It's super heavy. And I am grateful. My mom is a lifelong educator so this is gonna be a very good look for me. To be a part of a group like this is unimaginable. To speak on the behalf of our group is an honor that I am not sure if I am qualified for. Their accomplishments... The body of work represented on this stage is staggering. We have history-makers. Miracle-workers in their own way. If their names aren't on buildings yet, they're totally gonna be. I'd like to say that I am forever a student, and its people like this that I'll forever grateful to learn from. They are fearless, they're boundless, multi-disciplined and multi-talented. They break down barriers and embody the focus and dedication that this planet needs – even if, for Mark Kelly, it means leaving it from time to time. Some may call them public servants, but their work is actually in the service of humanity and standing with them here today... and it's totally mind blowing. In this day and age, it's easy to lose sight of the fact that it's the people who serve humanity, that make our world really go around. Most social media and media itself would lead you to believe otherwise. But this group's work doesn't fuel gossip. Sadly, it doesn't generate a lot of clicks amongst a sea of headlines designed to bait. Their work is often too important to be boiled down to just a quick headline. Their work has never been more important, yet as a society, we seem to celebrate less important

achievements far more frequently.

I am glad to be a part of a moment that recognizes these people.

The real moves and shakers.

Think about it... these great scientists, public servants, and activists cannot be bothered with building their Instagram followers.

Or how many views they get on Youtube.

But they are the real influencers.

Their work makes us healthier, safer, more enriched, and more intelligent.

Their work is designed to improve the quality of life for all people, not just themselves.

They are not motivated by attention. But rather, they're motivated by the idea of creating change – for the better.

I personally find that incredibly inspiring.

I hope you guys do as well.

NYU – The school you all chose to attend is going out of its way to honor this distinguished group.

What will they honor you guys for someday?

What will they honor you for someday?

Speaking to you guys today has me charged up.

It really has.

As you find your ways to serve humanity, it gives me great comfort knowing that this generation is the first that understands that we need to lift up our women.

Imagine the possibilities when we remove imbalance from the ether because it's unbalanced right now.

Imagine the possibilities when women are not held back.

Your generation is unraveling deeply entrenched laws, principles and misguided values that have held women back for far too long and therefore, have held us all back – the human race.

The world you will live in will be better for it.

This is the first generation that navigates the world with the security and the confidence to treat women as equal. You guys and girls are the first ever. I'm gonna say that again:

You guys are the first ever.

Our country has never seen this before. It makes some people uncomfortable.

But still I say: just imagine the possibilities.

Today is in many ways a celebration of higher education.

I am forever a student as I said before, I believe it is a trait – a trait we all share.

Yet we live in a time when a great education is harder and harder to come by.

But like anything in life, if there is enough demand, somebody will supply it.

So to the graduates, you might think your time in education is done, but after you leave here today, I am asking you guys to let your actions out there in the world; fuel the demand for better and accessible education.

Engage and inspire – whether on an individual level or loudly within your communities.

Talk about your accomplishments.

Talk about your accomplishments.

It's very important.

Talk about your accomplishments.

Be humble, but not too humble. Don't be invisible.

Sidebar... The days of being an anonymous activist or participant are over.

How can we inspire if we are only behind the scenes?

How will an anonymous donation ever inspire another? That was the way of previous generations. No disrespect. But don't be like them.

Let your actions serve as an endorsement for education and watch the demand rise.

Shine in a light on a group of individuals like these on this stage also helps fuel the demand. It's why all of

us standing here do what we do.

That same gene – those same feelings and adrenaline that fuels us, is inside all of you as well. Just like you, these recipients are brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters.

We put all of our pants on one leg at a time.

We all have a daily commute, but we do so with an eye towards something bigger. Serving humanity.

There is no humanity without education.

There is no education without demand. You are all walking endorsements for education. So please, embrace that.

Thank you again to the students and faculty at NYU. Thank you to these remarkable individuals that I am up here standing with.

For your service, leadership and inspiration.

We are all forever grateful. And I know that somebody out there right now in this class just might occupy the White House one day.

And let me be clear, not red and not blue but maybe purple like NY – U.

Thank you.

Queen Elizabeth

Lik's Brexit Commitment



My Lords and Members of the House of Commons.

My Government's priority has always been to secure the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union on 31 October. My Government intends to work towards a new partnership with the European Union, based on free trade and friendly cooperation.

My Ministers will work to implement new regimes for fisheries, agriculture and trade, seizing the opportunities that arise from leaving the European Union. An immigration bill, ending free movement, will

lay the foundation for a fair, modern and global immigration system. My Government remains committed to

ensuring that resident European citizens, who have built their lives in, and contributed so much to, the United Kingdom, have the right to remain. The bill will include measures that reinforce this commitment. Steps will be taken to provide certainty, stability and new opportunities for the financial services and legal sectors.

My Government's new economic plan will be underpinned by a responsible fiscal strategy, investing in economic growth while maintaining the sustainability of the public finances.

Measures will be brought forward to support and strengthen the National Health Service, its workforce and

resources, enabling it to deliver the highest quality care. New laws will be taken forward to help implement

the National Health Service's Long-Term Plan in England, and to establish an independent body to investigate serious healthcare incidents.

My Government will bring forward proposals to reform adult social care in England to ensure dignity in old

age. My Ministers will continue work to reform the Mental Health Act to improve respect for, and care of,

those receiving treatment.

My Government is committed to addressing violent crime, and to strengthening public confidence in the criminal justice system. New sentencing laws will see that the most serious offenders spend longer in custody to reflect better the severity of their crimes. Measures will be introduced to improve the justice system's response to foreign national offenders. My Government will work to improve safety and security in

prisons and to strengthen the rehabilitation of offenders. Proposals will be brought forward to ensure that victims receive the support they need and the justice they deserve. Laws will be introduced to ensure that the parole system recognizes the pain to victims and their families caused by offenders refusing to disclose

information relating to their crimes. A new duty will be placed on public sector bodies, ensuring they work together to address serious violence.

Police officers will be provided with the protections they need to keep the population safe. They will also be

awarded the power to arrest individuals who are wanted by trusted international partners.

My Government will bring forward measures to protect individuals, families and their homes. Legislation will

transform the approach of the justice system and other agencies to victims of domestic abuse, and minimize

the impact of divorce, particularly on children. My Ministers will continue to develop proposals to improve

internet safety, and will bring forward laws to implement new building safety standards.

My Ministers will ensure that all young people have access to an excellent education, unlocking their full potential and preparing them for the world of work. My Government will take steps to make work fairer, introducing measures that will support those working hard. To help people plan for the future, measures will be brought forward to provide simpler oversight of pensions savings. To protect people's savings for later life, new laws will provide greater powers to tackle irresponsible management of private pension schemes.

To ensure that the benefits of a prospering economy reach every corner of the United Kingdom, my Ministers will bring forward a National Infrastructure Strategy. This will set out a long-term vision to improve

the nation's digital, transport and energy infrastructure. New legislation will help accelerate the delivery of

fast, reliable and secure broadband networks to millions of homes. An aviation bill will provide for the effective and efficient management of the United Kingdom's airspace Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill. Proposals on railway reform will be brought forward.

A white paper will be published to set out my Government's ambitions for unleashing regional potential in

England, and to enable decisions that affect local people to be made at a local level.

My Government is committed to establishing the United Kingdom as a world-leader in scientific capability

and space technology. Increased investment in science will be complemented by the development of a new

funding agency, a more open visa system, and an ambitious national space strategy.

My Ministers remain committed to protecting and improving the environment for future generations. For the first time, environmental principles will be enshrined in law. Measures will be introduced to improve air

and water quality, tackle plastic pollution and restore habitats so plants and wildlife can thrive.

Legislation

will also create new legally-binding environmental improvement targets. A new, world-leading independent regulator will be established in statute to scrutinize environmental policy and law, investigate complaints and take enforcement action.

Proposals will also be brought forward to promote and protect the welfare of animals, including banning imports from trophy hunting.

The integrity and prosperity of the union that binds the four nations of the United Kingdom is of the utmost

importance to my Government. My Ministers will bring forward measures to support citizens across all the

nations of the United Kingdom. My Government remains committed to working with all parties in Northern Ireland to support the return of

devolved government and to address the legacy of the past.

My Government will take steps to protect the integrity of democracy and the electoral system in the United

Kingdom.

My Government will continue to invest in our gallant Armed Forces. My Ministers will honor the Armed Forces Covenant and the NATO commitment to spend at least two per cent of national income on defense.

As the United Kingdom leaves the European Union, my Government will ensure that it continues to play a

leading role in global affairs, defending its interests and promoting its values.

My Government will be at the forefront of efforts to solve the most complex international security issues. It

will champion global free trade and work alongside international partners to solve the most pressing global

challenges. It will prioritize tackling climate change and ensuring that all girls have access to twelve years of

quality education.

Members of the House of Commons.

Estimates for the public services will be laid before you.

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons.

Other measures will be laid before you.

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your counsels.

Trevor Noah

The Power of Information



Good morning/afternoon everybody. Good to have you. This is weird 'cause I'm just gonna talk to your phones and we're right here. It's a strange experience. Welcome to the millennial age. You'll have the picture and you'll show it to your friend and they'll go what does he look like in person? You go, I don't know, I was also looking at my phone when I should have been there with him.

First of all, thank you very much, Bill and Melinda for having me. When I was first asked to be here they said hey, we want you to come and speak at this event, Goalkeepers, and talk about what's happening in the world and I looked through all of the people speaking and I said but I have nothing. I do not have a fridge that can change lives, I do not have a plan to eradicate HIV in South Africa and in southern Africa and the rest of the continent and I most definitely cannot ride a motorbike so I don't know what I can do for you.

Bill just said come and share your thoughts, your stories, your ideas and I guess that's how I process information. That's how I process my world, so, I'll tell you a little bit about myself and why Goalkeepers means so much to me. So, in case you don't know me, my name is Trevor Noah, I grew up in South Africa

during a time known as apartheid and for those who don't know, apartheid was a system of laws which made it illegal for black people and white people to integrate with each other amongst other things. Black people lived in separate areas to white people, they had different rules, they were segregated and this was particularly tough for me because I grew up in a mixed family, well, with me being the mixed one in the family.

My mother's a black woman, a Xhosa woman from South Africa and in case you're wondering, Xhosa is one of the languages with the clicks in it, Xhosa. Xhosa but not like in American movies. I've seen those movies where they have the Africans and they're like. That's not a language, alright? No, even we watch those movies and we're like I wonder what they are saying. It's not a language but my mother's a Xhosa

woman, South African, my father's Swiss from Switzerland and was a white man and still is a white man, he didn't change and so they got together during this time which was against the law and they had me and it wasn't easy growing up in this family and that's really where our journey began because we were a family that couldn't be together, we were a family that was for all intents and purposes a crime that existed, me being the born from my mother because of my father was me being born a crime and one of the biggest things I connected with when reading about Goalkeepers and learning about the organization was the optimism, was the ability to see what no one could see at a time when no one should almost have the right to see it and my mother was one of those people.

My mother's a beautiful, powerful woman who endured a lot during her life. We lived through apartheid in South Africa, we lived through her going on to marry a man who was extremely abusive, an alcoholic and throughout all of that the one thing that I always admired in my mom was that she had the ability to appreciate the reality of the world she was in but also optimistically pursue the future that she wished to exist in and that's for me what Goalkeepers is all about, optimism.

People always ask, they go is the world going to be in a better place? Is the world getting better or is it getting worse. Now, depending on who you ask there will always be a different answer. I've come to find one of the reasons I believe the world is getting better is because we have access to information on how bad the world actually is which I know is a strange thing to say but that's honestly what I believe. As a young person and as someone who makes a show for young people, one of the most powerful tools I've realized is information. We come from an age where there was misinformation, disinformation and there is some of it today but now more than ever young people communicate across borders, across continents, you see people in England and in America and South Africa tweeting, talking to people in Myanmar.

You see people speaking out about what they see happening in Sudan, you see people commiserating and sharing with victims of hurricanes across the Caribbean or across Texas and whenever I look at that I go it's one of the most powerful tools that if harnessed correctly can lead to a completely new way that we communicate and that we change the world. And young people are driven. That's one of the most beautiful things I've realized is that we live in a new age. Millennials oftentimes are marked as they're lazy, they believe that they're entitled and they cry about small things which is true but they're also driven, they also wish to make a change, they also believe that they can make a change.

I believe that information and these tools that we possess today have helped increase that. More than ever we see that in America. As the host of The Daily Show I'm obviously in a world where we comment on news and politics and one thing I've noticed with my audience is not only are young people growing into the world of politics but they're engaged, engaged in a way that people were never engaged before, engaged in a way where they understand that they can actually change the course of history as opposed to just being a part of it. It's a beautiful experience to see that's taking place across continents. In my home country South Africa we see the same thing, young people standing up and saying we don't accept the status quo, we can change our destiny, we can change the future, we can be a part of this world and essentially that's what's happening in America right now, you feel it.

People always come up to me and they go, Trevor, as the host of The Daily Show how do you feel about Donald Trump? I say well, I don't know how to feel about him that's the honest truth. He's a paradox for me emotionally. One part of me is terrified at the notion that he is president of the most powerful nation of the world, the other side of me knows that every day he's going to make me laugh. I cannot deny this. The best way I can put it is it's almost like there's a giant astroid headed towards the Earth but it's shaped like penis. I think I'm gonna die but I know I'm gonna laugh.

And this is a tough place to be in because you have to process the very real situation that you are in and that is a dangerous one but at the same time you can acknowledge that when you laugh, you're not

controlled by fear and that's something that I've always lived with in my life, in my family. My mother always said to me, she said when we are laughing, we are not afraid. When we are laughing we are experiencing our truer selves. It doesn't mean what I'm happening to us is not real but it means that we can process the very real world that is happening to us and in many ways I try and look at the positives. People go, is the world getting better? I go I believe it's always getting better but in many ways the world is like the body. You cannot see the change when you look at it every single day but if you take snapshots you can see how things are getting better. you can also see how some things are getting worse, climate change is one of those and that's where young people are stepping up and saying hey, hurricanes are a good example, the intensity of these once-in-a-lifetime events has increased, maybe it's time to do something. Young people are speaking up. Donald Trump is doing that. People are speaking up, they're engaging like never before.

For the first time in history we're living through a time period where we're learning about the presidency at the same time as the president which is engaging people like never before. You wake up, you read the newspaper and you go I never knew this before and somewhere at that exact same moment the president is reading that same newspaper saying the exact same thing and that for me is exciting. Is it scary? Yes, but most exciting things are scary but honestly, I saw it over the last few weeks and I mean it's

still unfolding now. You have Hurricane Maria which is wreaking havoc and moving to Puerto Rico now and we're seeing the devastation but we've also seen the giving.

I was touched by how many people even on our show reached out and there is an opportunity for everyone to become a goalkeeper which is what excites me and that is in this new world of technology we have the opportunity to engage with activists on the ground level. People often mock millennials and they say these are hashtag activists and I argue they're hashtag activists until they're given the opportunity to take it from a tweet into the street and so I urge every single one of you in this room if you have the power, if you have the ability, if you have the information or the knowledge, take these people up on what they're offering. They're energized, they're optimistic, they're powerful beyond all measure and I'm proud to say that I am one of them, I am a millennial and by proxy I hope to be a goalkeeper. Thank you very much for having me and congratulations on everything today

Anjelina Jolie

What we stand for?



Good evening. I am truly honored to be here with you tonight and thank you to the foundation for inviting me and thank you all for sharing at this moment.

We are here in memory of Sergio Vieira de Mello and the 21 other men and women, most of them UN workers, who died with him in the bombing of the UN Headquarters in Baghdad in August 2003.

We remember all those who died, to acknowledge each valuable life cut short, and the families who share, even today, in their sacrifice.

We also remember them for the power of the example they set: brave individuals from 11 different countries, working to help Iraqi people, at the direction of the United Nations Security Council, and on behalf of us all.

This is sometimes forgotten: that in serving under the UN flag they died in our names, as our representatives.

At their head was Sergio Vieira de Mello, a man of extraordinary grace and ability, as so many who knew him testify.

A man who gave 30 years to the United Nations, rising from a field officer to High Commissioner for Human

Rights and Special Representative to Iraq.

From Bangladesh and Bosnia to South Sudan to East Timor, he spent the majority of his career in the field,

working alongside people forced from their homes by war, and assisting them with his skill as a diplomat and negotiator.

Perhaps the greatest testament to his contribution, is how much his advice would be valued today.

As the Syrian conflict enters its seventh year, as we live through the gravest refugee crisis since the founding

of the United Nations, as 20 million people are on the brink of death from starvation in Yemen, Somalia,

South Sudan and northeast Nigeria, I cannot imagine that there is anyone in the leadership of the United Nations who would not welcome the opportunity to consult Sergio, or send him into the field once more.

He

is truly missed, even today.

It is humbling for me to speak tonight in the presence of members of Sergio's family and his former colleagues.

I never knew Sergio, but I have stood before the plaque in the place where he died.

I felt profound sadness at the fact that the conflict in Iraq – the source of so much Iraqi suffering to this day

- had claimed the lives of men and women whose only intention was to try and improve a desperate situation.

But I also saw clearly the value and nobility of a life spent in service of others.

Sergio was a man who never turned down an assignment, no matter how difficult and dangerous - or as others have put it, was "handed one impossible task after another".

He was a man, to borrow the words of Thomas Paine, whose country was the world, and whose religion was

to do good.

He will always remain a hero and inspiration to all who follow in his footsteps.

The UN's work did not end there, in the rubble of the Canal Hotel, 14 years ago.

Hundreds of UN staff have served, and continue to, serve in Iraq, as they do from Afghanistan to Somalia, because the task of building peace and security can never be abandoned, no matter how bleak the situation.

My thoughts on Sergio's life and legacy derive from my 16 years with UNHCR, the Agency he spent so much

of his career serving and representing.

But I also speak as a citizen of my country – the United States.

I believe all of us who work with the UN preserve this duality. The United Nations is not a country, it is a place where we come together as nations and people to try to resolve our differences and unite in common action.

As a citizen, I find myself looking out on a global environment that seems more troubling and uncertain than

at any time in my lifetime. I imagine many of you may feel the same.

We are grappling with a level of conflict and insecurity that seems to exceed our will and capabilities: with

more refugees than ever before, and new wars erupting on top of existing conflicts, some already lasting decades.

We see a rising tide of nationalism, masquerading as patriotism, and the re-emergence of policies encouraging fear and hatred of others.

We see some politicians elected partly on the basis of dismissing international institutions and agreements, as if our countries have not benefited from cooperation, but actually been harmed by it. We hear some leaders talking as if some of our proudest achievements are in fact our biggest liabilities – whether it is the tradition of successfully integrating refugees into our societies, or the institutions and treaties we have built rooted in laws and human rights.

We see nations that played a proud role in the founding of the International Criminal Court withdrawing from it, on the one hand, and on the other, we see arrest warrants for alleged war crimes issued but not implemented, and other crimes ignored altogether.

We see a country like South Sudan ushered by the international community into independence, then largely abandoned – not by the UN agencies and NGOs – but effectively abandoned, without the massive support they needed to make a success of sovereignty.

And we see resolutions and laws on the protection of civilians and the use of chemical weapons, for instance, flouted repeatedly, in some cases under the cover of Security Council vetoes, as in Syria. Many of these things are not new – but taken together – and in the absence of strong international leadership, they are deeply worrying.

When we consider all this and more, as citizens, what is our answer?

Do we, as some would encourage us to think, turn our backs on the world, and hope we can wait for storms to pass?

Or do we strengthen our commitment to diplomacy and to the United Nations?

I strongly believe there is only one choice, demanded by reason as well as by conscience, which is the hard work of diplomacy and negotiation and reform of the UN.

This is not to say that that is any way an easy road. And there are reasons people feel insecure today. The level of conflict and lack of solutions combined with the fear of terrorism; the reality that globalization

has brought vast benefits to some but worsened the lot of others; the sense of a disconnect between citizens and governments, or in some countries the lack of governance; the overall feeling that for all our gains in technology and connectedness, we are less in control of forces shaping our lives – all these factors and more have contributed to a sense of a world out of balance, and there are no easy answers.

And despite the millions of people who have lifted themselves out of poverty in our lifetimes, the difference

between the lives of those of us born in wealthy, democratic societies and those born into the slums and refugee camps of the world is a profound injustice. We see it and we know it to be wrong, at a simple human level. That inequality is contributing to instability, conflict and migration as well as to the sense that the international system serves the few at the expense of the many.

But again, what is our answer, as citizens?

Do we withdraw from the world where before we felt a responsibility to be part of solutions?

I am a proud American and I am an internationalist.

I believe anyone committed to human rights is an internationalist.

It means seeing the world with a sense of fairness and humility, and recognizing our own humanity in the struggles of others.

It stems from love of one's country, but not at the expense of others - from patriotism, but not from narrow

nationalism.

It includes the view that success isn't being better or greater than others, but finding your place in a world where others succeed too.

And that a strong nation, like a strong person, helps others to rise up and be independent.

It is the spirit that made possible the creation of the UN, out of the rubble and ruin and 60 million dead of World War Two; so that even before the task of defeating Nazism was complete, that generation of wartime

leaders was forging the United Nations.

If governments and leaders are not keeping that flame of internationalism alive today, then we as citizens must.

The challenge is how to restore that sense of balance and hopefulness in our countries, while not sacrificing

all we have learnt about the value and necessity of internationalism.

Because a world in which we turn our back on our global responsibilities will be a world that produces greater insecurity, violence and danger for us and for our children.

This is not a clash between idealism and realism.

It is the recognition that there is no shortcut to peace and security, and no substitute for the long, painstaking effort to end conflicts, expand human rights and strengthen the rule of law.

We have to challenge the idea that the strongest leaders are those most willing to dismiss human rights on the grounds of national interest. The strongest leaders are those who are capable of pursuing both.

Having strong values and the will to act upon them doesn't weaken our borders or our militaries – it is their essential foundation.

None of this is to say that the UN is perfect. Of course, it is not.

I have never met a field officer who has not railed against its shortcomings, as I imagine Sergio did in his darkest moments.

He, like all of us, wanted a UN that was more decisive, less bureaucratic, and that lived up to its standards.

But he never said it was pointless. He never threw in the towel.

The UN is an imperfect organization because we are imperfect. It is not separate from us. Our decisions, particularly those made by the Security Council, have played a part in creating the landscape we are dealing with today.

We should always remember why the UN was formed, and what it is for, and take that responsibility seriously.

We have to recognize the damage we do when we undermine the UN or use it selectively - or not at all - or when we rely on aid to do the job of diplomacy, or give the UN impossible tasks and then underfund it. For example today, there is not a single humanitarian appeal anywhere in the world that is funded by even half of what is required. In fact it is worse than that. Appeals for countries on the brink of famine today are 17%, 7%, and 5% funded, for example.

Of course, emergency aid is not the long-term answer. No one prefers that kind of aid. Not citizens of donor countries. Not governments. Not refugees. They do not want to be dependent.

It would be far better to be able to invest all our funds in infrastructure and schools and trade and enterprises.

But let's be clear, emergency aid has to continue because many states cannot or will not protect the rights of citizens around the world.

It is what we spend in countries where we have no diplomacy or our diplomacy is not working. Until we do better at preventing and reducing conflict, we are doomed to be in a cycle of having to help feed or shelter people when societies collapse.

As another legendary UN leader, who was also killed in the line of duty, Dag Hammerskold, said "Everything will be all right – you know when? When people, just people, stop thinking of the United Nations as a weird Picasso abstraction and see it as a drawing they made themselves".

The UN can only change if governments change their policies. And if we as citizens ask our governments to do that.

It is moving, if you think about it: We are the future generations envisaged in the UN Charter. When our grandparents resolved to "spare future generations the scourge of war", as written in the Charter, they were thinking of us.

But as well as dreaming of our safety they also left us a responsibility.

President Roosevelt, addressing the US Congress in January 1945, six months before the end of Second World War, said this:

"In the field of foreign policy, we propose to stand together with the United Nations not for the war alone but for the victory for which the war is fought".

He went on:

"The firm foundation can be built- and it will be built. But the continuance and assurance of a living peace must, in the long run, be the work of the people themselves."

Today, we have to ask ourselves, are we living up to that mission?

They gave us that start. What have we done with it?

It is clear to me that we have made huge strides. But our agreements and institutions are only as strong as our will to uphold them today.

And if we do not, for whatever reason, we bequeath a darker and more unstable world to all those who

come after us. It is not for this that previous generations shed blood and worked so hard on behalf of all of us.

The memory of those who came before us holds us true to our ideals.

Resting unchanging in time, they remind us of who we are and what we stand for.

They give us hope to stay in the fight, as Sergio did, until his last breath.

14 years since his death, there is a stronger need than ever before for us to stay true to the ideals and purposes of the United Nations. That is what I hope his memory holds us to today.

We can't all be Sergios. But I hope all of us can determine that we shall be a generation that renews its commitment to "unite our strength to maintain international peace and security", and "to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom."

But in the final analysis, even if we do not, even if that level of vision eludes us and we continue to simply

manage rather than to try to overcome our generation's challenges, we have to keep working determinedly and patiently.

And you can be certain, as you do, that you follow the example of one of the UN's finest sons: and that to do even a little of his good, to apply ourselves to the work he left unfinished, in whatever way we can, is a worthy task for any one of us.

Thank you

Anne Hathaway

Paid Family leave



When I was a young person, I began my career as an actress. Whenever my mother wasn't free to drive me into Manhattan for auditions, I would take the train from suburban New Jersey and meet my father — who would have left his desk at the law office where he worked — and we would meet under the Upper Platform Arrivals and Departures sign in Penn Station. We would then get onto the subway together and, when we surfaced, he would ask me "Which way is north?" I wasn't very good at finding North at the beginning, but I auditioned fair amount and so my Dad kept asking "Which way is north?" Over time, I got better at finding it.

I was struck by that memory yesterday while boarding the plane to come here. Not just by how far my life has come since then, but by how meaningful that seemingly small lesson has been. When I was still a child,

my father developed my sense of direction and now, as an adult, I trust my ability to navigate space. My father helped give me the confidence to guide myself through the world.

In late March, last year, 2016, I became a parent for the first time. I remember the indescribable—and as I understand a pretty universal — experience of holding my week-old son and feeling my priorities change on

a cellular level. I remember I experienced a shift in consciousness that gave me the ability to maintain my love of career and cherish something else, someone else, so much, much more. Like so many parents, I wondered how I was going to balance my work with my new role as a parent, and in that moment, I remember that the statistic for the US's policy on maternity leave flashed in my mind.

American women are currently entitled to 12 weeks' unpaid leave. American men are entitled to nothing. That information landed differently for me when, one week after my son's birth I could barely walk. That information landed different when I was getting to know a human who was completely dependent on my husband and I for everything, when I was dependent on my husband for most things, when we were

relearning everything we thought we knew about our family and relationship. It landed differently. Somehow, we and every American parent were expected to be “back to normal” in under three months. Without income. I remember thinking to myself, “If the practical reality of pregnancy is another mouth to feed in your home and America is a country where most people are living paycheck to paycheck, how does

12 weeks unpaid leave economically work?”

The truth is, for too many people it doesn't. One in four American women go back to work two weeks after

giving birth because they can't afford to take any more time off than that. That's 25 per cent of American women. Equally disturbing, women who can afford to take the full 12 weeks often don't because it will mean incurring a “motherhood penalty”— meaning they will be perceived as less dedicated to their job and will be passed over for promotions and other career advancement. In my own household, my mother had to

choose between a career and raising three children - a choice that left her unpaid and underappreciated as a homemaker - because there just wasn't support for both paths. The memory of being in the city with my Dad is a particularly meaningful one since he was the sole breadwinner in our house, and my brothers and my time with him was always limited by how much he had to work. And we were an incredibly privileged

family — our hardships were the stuff of other family's dreams.

The deeper into the issue of paid parental leave I go, the clearer I see the connection between persisting barriers to women's full equality and empowerment, and the need to redefine and in some cases, destigmatize men's role as caregivers. In other words, in order to liberate women, we need to liberate men.

The assumption and common practice that women and girls look after the home and the family is a stubborn and very real stereotype that not only discriminates against women, but limits men's participation

and connection within the family and society. These limitations have broad-ranging and significant effects,

for them and for children. We know this. So why do we continue to undervalue fathers and overburden mothers?

Paid parental leave is not about taking days off work; it is about creating freedom to define roles, to choose

how to invest time, and to establish new, positive cycles of behavior. Companies that have offered paid parental leave for employees have reported improved employee retention, reduced absenteeism and training costs, and boosted productivity and morale. Far from not being able to afford to have paid parental

leave, it seems we can't afford not to.

In fact, a study in Sweden showed that every month fathers took paternity leave, the mothers' income increased by 6.7 per cent. That's 6.7 per cent more economic freedom for the whole family. Data from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey shows that most fathers report that they would work less if it

meant that they could spend more time with their children. And picking up on the thread that the prime minister mentioned I'd like to ask: How many of us here today saw our Dads enough growing up? How many

of you Dads here see your kids enough now?

We need to help each other if we are going to grow.

Along with UN Women, I am issuing a call to action for countries, companies and institutions globally to

step-up and become champions for paid parental leave. In 2013, provisions for parental leave were in only 66 countries out of 190 UN member states. I look forward to beginning with the UN itself which has not yet

achieved parity and who's paid parental leave policies are currently up for review. All you're going to see a

lot of me. Let us lead by example in creating a world in which women and men are not economically punished for wanting to be parents.

I don't mean to imply that you need to have children to care about and benefit from this issue — whether or

not you have — or want kids, you will benefit by living in a more evolved world with policies not based on

gender. We all benefit from living in a more compassionate time where our needs do not make us weak, they make us fully human. Maternity leave, or any workplace policy based on gender, can—at this moment in history—only ever be a

gilded cage. Though it was created to make life easier for women, we now know it creates a perception of women as being inconvenient to the workplace. We now know it chains men to an emotionally limited path.

And it cannot, by definition, serve the reality of a world in which there is more than one type of family. Because in the modern world, some families have two daddies. How exactly does maternity leave serve them?

Today, on International Women's Day, I would like to thank all those who went before in creating our current policies—let us honour them and build upon what they started by shifting our language - and therefore our consciousness—away from gender and towards opportunity. Let us honor our own parents sacrifice by creating a path for a more fair, farther the reaching truth to define all of our lives, especially the lives our children.

Because paid parental leave does more than give more time for parents to spend with their kids. It changes

the story of what children observe, and will from themselves imagine possible.

I see cause for hope. In my own country, the United States—currently the only high-income country in the

world without paid maternity let alone parental leave—great work has begun in the states of New York, California, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Washington which are currently implementing paid parental leave

programs. First Lady Charlene McCray and Mayor Bill de Blasio have granted paid parental leave to over 20,000 government employees in NYC. We can do this.

Bringing about change cannot just be the responsibility of those who need it most; we must have the support of those at the highest levels of power if we are ever to achieve parity. That is why it is such an honor to recognize and congratulate pioneers of paid parental leave like the global company Danone.

Today

I am proud to announce Danone Global CEO, Emmanuel Faber as our inaugural HeForShe Thematic Champion for Paid Parental Leave. As part of this announcement, Danone will implement a global 18 weeks

gender-neutral paid parental leave policy for the company's 100,000 employees by the year 2020.

Monsieur

Faber, when Ambassador Emma Watson delivered her now iconic HeForShe speech and stated that if we live in a world where men occupy a majority of positions of power, we need men to believe in the

necessity

of change, I believe she was speaking about visionaries like you. Merci.

Imagine what the world could look like one generation from now if a policy like Danone's becomes the new

standard. If 100,000 people become 100 million.

A billion. More. Every generation must find their north.

When women around the world demanded the right to vote, we took a fundamental step toward equality. North.

When the same sex marriage was passed in the US, we put an end to a discriminatory law. North.

When millions of men and boys when millions of men and boys and prime ministers and deputy directors of

the UN, sorry, the president of the General Assembly. That's what happens when I go out of the script.

When men like the men in this room and around the world. The ones we cannot see. The ones who support

us in ways we cannot know but we feel. When they answered Emma Watson's call to be HeForShe, the world grew.

North.

We must ask ourselves, how will we be more tomorrow than we are today?

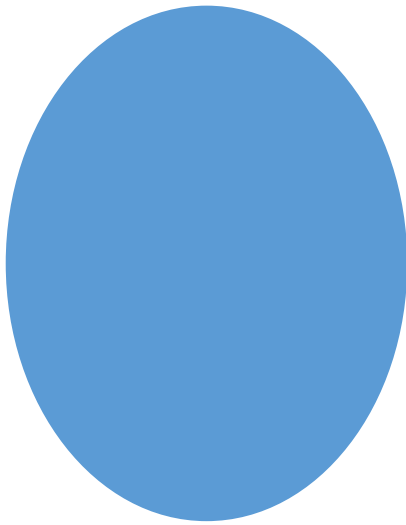
The whole world grows when people like you and me take a stand because we know that beyond the idea of

how women and men are different, there is a deeper truth that love is love, and parents are parents.

Thank you.

Benedict Cumberbatch

Just Do it!



Dear Eva,

It will be almost a month since you wrote to me and you have possibly forgotten your state of mind (I doubt

it though). You seem the same as always, and being you, hate every minute of it. Don't! Learn to say "Fuck

You" to the world once in a while. You have every right to. Just stop thinking, worrying, looking over your

shoulder, wondering, doubting, fearing, hurting, hoping for some easy way out, struggling, grasping, confusing, itching, scratching, mumbling, bumbling, grumbling, humbling, stumbling, numbling, rambling,

gambling, tumbling, scumbling, scrambling, hitching, hatching, bitching, moaning, groaning, honing, boning,

horse-shitting, hair-splitting, nit-picking, piss-trickling, nose sticking, ass-gouging, eyeball-poking, fingerpointing, alleyway-sneaking, long waiting, small stepping, evil-eyeing, back-scratching, searching, perching,

bemirching, grinding, grinding, grinding away at yourself. Stop it and just DO.

From your description, and from what I know of your previous work and your ability; the work you are doing

sounds very good "Drawing—clean—clear but crazy like machines, larger and bolder... real nonsense."

That sounds fine, wonderful—real nonsense. Do more. More nonsensical, more crazy, more machines, more breasts, penises, cunts, whatever—make them abound with nonsense. Try and tickle something inside you, your "weird humor." You belong in the most secret part of you. Don't worry about cool, make your own uncool. Make your own, your own world. If you fear, make it work for you—draw & paint your

fear & anxiety. And stop worrying about big, deep things such as "to decide on a purpose and way of life, a

constant approach to even some impossible end or even an imagined end." You must practice being stupid, dumb, unthinking, empty. Then you will be able to DO.

I have much confidence in you and even though you are tormenting yourself, the work you do is very

good.

Try to do some BAD work—the worst you can think of and see what happens but mainly relax and let everything go to hell—you are not responsible for the world—you are only responsible for your work—so

DO IT. And don't think that your work has to conform to any preconceived form, idea or flavor. It can be anything you want it to be. But if life would be easier for you if you stopped working—then stop. Don't punish yourself. However, I think that it is so deeply engrained in you that it would be easier to DO.

It seems I do understand your attitude somewhat, anyway, because I go through a similar process every so often. I have an “Agonizing Reappraisal” of my work and change everything as much as possible—and hate

everything I've done, and try to do something entirely different and better. Maybe that kind of process is necessary to me, pushing me on and on. The feeling that I can do better than that shit I just did. Maybe you

need your agony to accomplish what you do. And maybe it goads you on to do better. But it is very painful I

know. It would be better if you had the confidence just to do the stuff and not even think about it. Can't you

leave the “world” and “ART” alone and also quit fondling your ego. I know that you (or anyone) can only work so much and the rest of the time you are left with your thoughts. But when you work or before your work you have to empty your mind and concentrate on what you are doing. After you do something it is done and that's that. After a while you can see some are better than others but also you can see what direction you are going. I'm sure you know all that. You also must know that you don't have to justify your

work—not even to yourself. Well, you know I admire your work greatly and can't understand why you are

so bothered by it. But you can see the next ones & I can't. You also must believe in your ability. I think you

do. So try the most outrageous things you can—shock yourself. You have at your power the ability to do anything.

I would like to see your work and will have to be content to wait until Aug or Sept. I have seen photos of some of Tom's new things at Lucy's. They are very impressive—especially the ones with the more rigorous

form; the simpler ones. I guess he'll send some more later on. Let me know how the shows are going and that kind of stuff.

My work has changed since you left and it is much better. I will be having a show May 4–29 at the Daniels

Gallery 17 E 64th St (where Emmerich was), I wish you could be there. Much love to you both.

Sol



Cory Booker

Let America be America Again

I'm in this weird state in my life where I'm incredibly excited. I literally get up every morning with this amazing enthusiasm about what can be but this very deep sober understanding of what is. I feel this amazing, awesome, sense of vision about where we are -- could go as a country, what I desperately believe is our destiny.

But I get very humbled when I look at the challenges. And I want to jump into this in a way that you may not expect. But I would like to take us to what is a reality for thousands and thousands of Americans and a moment of mine when I wasn't in selected office.

It was 2004. It was April. My father was visiting me for my birthday. And we were taking a walk in my neighborhood. I lived at that point in the central ward of Newark. Newark is a City of great diversity with wealthy neighborhoods, with poor neighborhoods. This was one of the poor census tracts in our city. I was living in some high-rise public housing projects.

We were walking down the road. I will never forget the gunshots that rang out sounded like cannon fire because they echoed between many of the buildings. I turned around to see kids running down the hill towards me screaming. I sprinted through the children to get to the steps where I saw another kid sort of holding onto the bannister, stumbling backwards. And I caught him in my arms. Looked over his shoulder and I saw his white T-shirt filling with red blood. I remember putting him down on the ground, screaming at people to call an ambulance. And blood just seemed to be coming from everywhere.

I found out his name. His name was Juazin. I drew my hands into his bloody shirt, having no medical training whatsoever, just trying to stop the blood. It was like nothing you see on TV. There was no eloquence about it. It was just messy and disgusting. Blood was pouring from his mouth. I stuck my fingers in because I heard him gagging, trying to clear his airway. It was continuous. It seemed like hours until the ambulance finally arrived.

By that time, his body was lifeless. I was pushed out of the way. They ripped open his T-shirt, and he had three bullet holes in the front of his chest and one on his side. I remember getting up off the grass where I was just sitting watching the emergency personnel try to save his life. And he was, unfortunately, by that point dead. And walking over to my dad who looked at me covered in another boy's blood, and I insisted he went home. I stayed and talked to the police. I went home. I lived on the top floor of these projects. I walked up the steps, 16 flights. Get to the door. My dad opens the door.

We have this moment where we're just staring at each other. Now, my dad is a guy who says all the time that he is the result of a grand conspiracy of love. And, thus -- and, therefore, you are, son, not only born in a -- from a grand conspiracy of love; but you were born on third base. And don't ever think you hit a triple. Your father was born -- your father was born to a single mother. Born poor. And, in fact, he'll get upset with me if he hears me call him born poor. "I was just po', p-o. I couldn't afford the other two letters." And he was born in a viciously segregated town in the mountains in North Carolina.

He was born where his mother couldn't take care of him. He was raised by his grandmother. 11% of kids

in my city, or around that, are raised by their grandparents. His grandmother couldn't take care of him, and then he was taken in by the community. And it was the community that intervened with him, that conspired to make sure he got on the right track in school when he couldn't afford to go to college and said he was going to put it off to work, they said, "You'll never go to college." So he tells me this story about getting envelopes full of dollar bills so that he could pay his first semester's tuition and get a job at North Carolina Central University, a small historically black college in North Carolina.

And then his life then became a story of interventions. He was able to graduate, got his first job thanks to blacks and whites coming together through the Urban League and helping companies hire blacks for the first time. Interventions. He then moved into the first house that I grew up in because of an organization called the Fair Housing Council. Blacks and whites coming together sent out a white test couple who worked with my parents to break open a town that I grew up in as my father called us when we moved in, he called us the four raisins in the tub of vanilla ice cream. But my dad would sit me at the kitchen table and tell me these stories. And it was a conspiracy of love that got us to where we are.

And so now I'm sitting in this doorway with my dad staring at me with a boy's blood on myself. And I sort

of pushed past him and said, "Dad, I just want to go to the bathroom." And I walked in and I closed the door on my father, my history, my rock, and I stared at myself in the mirror and began to try to scrape this boy's blood off my hands. And I am a guy that suffers from a severe case of BO. Don't worry about it, people moving their chairs back. Bold optimism. At this point, I'm staring in the mirror, my hands are shaking. The blood is off my hands. I keep scrubbing because I just feel the blood on my hands. And I felt myself becoming choked with an anger that just is rare to my being.

And I felt angry at this nation that professes where children sing a chorus to our country every day that we are one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. But there's such a dramatic between the -- how could everybody in this room know who I'm talking about when I say Natalie Holloway or JonBenet Ramsey, but not one person in this room could name a kid that was shot this year in an inner city. And there were thousands. I became frustrated with who we claim to be, but the savage realities of who we are.

I then I walk out and I look at my father, who says to me, "Son, I worry about our nation. What battles we have fought, my generation, the generation before me. How we emboldened this democracy, how we made it more real and made it more true, but now I worry that a boy born to a single mother in a poor neighborhood, in a segregated neighborhood, who couldn't be raised by his mother, was taken in by others, that was born in those circumstances in 1936 has a better life chance to make it than a child born under the same circumstances in 2006 or 2010." My father, I felt like he was indicting my generation, this generation of astounding achievement, this generation of incredible advancement and access. And he was standing there, looking at me, his son, who was so shaken, and he, this optimistic man, who believes deeply in this country and this nation, as he calls it, a conspiracy of love, how he could there suddenly be doubtful.

And I left that apartment the next morning, and I walked down the stairs, and I slammed into the presence of a woman named Ms. Virginia Jones. And she is -- was the tenant president of those buildings and had been since the day they were built. She was an elderly woman. She was about five foot and a smidgen, but I look up to her. And I didn't even have to have a conversation with her. I saw the back of her head and my funk just disappeared.

And I suddenly felt this sense of hope and excitement again. And the funk disappeared because I interviewed her a few years earlier for an article I was writing a couple years earlier for an article I was writing for esquire. And I told them I wanted to write about American heroes and I picked a woman nobody heard about. In the course of interviewing her, this fearsome woman who had done so much personally. In fact, on my first day meeting her, I was still a Yale Law student, she brought me into the

middle of Martin Luther King Boulevard, and said to me, "You want to help me?"

I was lost, and I said, "Yes, ma'am." And she said, "Okay. If you want to help me, look around you. What do you see?" And I described a crack house, graffiti, all the problems. Then she just looked at me and said,

"You can never help me." And I said, "What are you talking about?" And she looked at me hard, and she said, "Boy, you need to understand something, that the world you see outside of you is a reflection of what you have inside of you, and if you're one of those people who only sees problems and darkness and despair, that's all there's ever going to be. But if you're one of those people who stubbornly, every time you open your eyes, you see hope, you see opportunity, you see possibilities, you see love, you see the face of God, then you can probably help me."

And I remember, she walked away on that first moment of meeting her, I looked at my shoes, I said, okay,

grass hop per, thus endeth the lesson. So, when I walked out from that building, there's a story that I remember was her telling me about her son who fought for the U.S. military, who came back to this country and was visiting his mother, his mother got a knock on the door, Ms. Jones did, the woman couldn't speak, she was crying,

she got grabbed by the woman, dragged down five flights of stairs, and there was her son, shot to death in the lobby, bleeding it red. She told me she fell to her knees and wailed into the echoes of the lobby. I looked at her when she finished that story, and I said, Ms. Jones, I know where you work. She worked for the prosecutor's -- she and I paid market rent to live in these -- these buildings. And I said, "I just -- I don't understand. Why do you still live here where you have to walk through the lobby of the building where your child was murdered?" And she looked at me almost like she was insulted by the question.

She said, "Why do I still live here?" "Yes." "Why am I still in apartment 5A?" "Yes, Ms. Jones, why."

And

she goes, "Why am I still the tenant president from the day these buildings were built 40 years ago?" And I said, "Yes, Ms. Jones, why." And she stuffed out her chest and she said, "Because I'm in charge of homeland security."

To me, this is what keeps my fired up in Newark, is that I live in a city with the most stubbornly hopeful, the most audaciously determined individuals who have not given up on the truth of the American dream and confront in every moment the unfulfilled, unfinished dream. And there are people that realize in an intellectual and spiritual way that if we who are on the front lines of this fight for America can't solve this problem, the country as a whole will suffer. As Langston Hughes said, "There is a dream in this land with its back against the wall. To save the dream for one, we must save it for all." And what gives me hope is, after five years in a job which people told me would grind down my idealism, which would squeeze out my optimism, my hope, which would make an idealist a realist, I'm telling you that I am hope unhinged. Because I see the national problems that we have every day when I leave my apartment in Newark, New Jersey. And I see how they are cancer on the soul of this country and our economy. But I also see Newark,

New Jersey, like so many other cities, are littered with examples, are littered with models that demonstrate to us that there is a way out, and, in fact, that our challenges do not reflect a lack of capacity to deal with them. They reflect a lack of collective will. And this is what has me both so fired up and angry,

but also incredibly hopeful and full of love.

Let me deal with two complex problems. And I love talking about these problems to people of any political persuasion, because whether you are somebody who hates big government or believes in government, you have to join with me in saying that perhaps some of the greatest waste in America right now is the fact that we're investing in systems that produce such abhorrent failure. The criminal justice

system is one of those systems that we spend billions of dollars, billions of dollars annually, in a correctional system in New Jersey, for example, that does nothing to correct the problems.

The other system is this system of public education that right now is failing to prepare the majority of our children for a 21st century economy that is a knowledge-based economy. The more you learn, the more you earn. And forget about earn, the more you contribute, the more you grow. Now, the criminal justice system, actually, my team said, this is crazy. My friend, Michael Bloomberg, says this all the time.

We're unconscious to the fact that every day, we are a Virginia Tech in America. Every single day, there's 30 plus people murdered in our city, countless more that are shot, every day. And I always joke with my friends, I said, you know, guys who get shot don't show up to the hospital with health insurance. In fact, we found out the victims of shootings in our city, about 83 or 84% of them have been arrested before.

And the average arrests are ten times that they have been engaged in the criminal justice system as adults, not to mention their child arrests. We couldn't believe it when we started seeing this pattern that we have in America of criminality that becomes ingrained. In fact, generationally ingrained, because the children who most likely go to prison in America are children of incarcerated adults.

And so we started looking at this system and saying, why are we engaged in this ridiculous game that we believe that somehow there's some correlation between the more arrests we do and the lower crime.

There's no correlation whatsoever. And my police officers, one of them was here, sitting over there on the side -- yes, he has his gun with him.

Jim Stier, behave yourself, or we're coming after you. My police officers could drive by corners and name the guys there. And when we would get out in the corners and I would engage the fellows, the fellows would know who the police officers are. And so we started saying that there has to be the ability for Americans to innovate a way out of this. There's got to be a way to create radical shifts in realities.

We said, let's start experimenting with system change to demonstrate in a policy way that we have choices in America to make. And so we started looking around. Who is doing something to end this nightmare that when a person is arrested, that they won't leave a system with 60-plus, 60 to 70-plus come right back? So we started trying to find new ways. We looked at programs all around the country. First of all, we found out when we interviewed guys that they come out and they all express a desire to do the right thing.

One of my friends who's very involved in the criminal justice system, guys on the street, says, 5% are knuckleheads. You can go to any profession, from politicians, to you name it, 5% of us are knuckleheads and belong under a prison. But 95% actually are far more rational economic actors than you think. So a guy coming out of prison who can't get a driver's license, they know who they are to arrest him, but he comes out, doesn't have identification, it's an amazing struggle, doesn't want to go see the mother of their children because they owe them so much money in child support payments.

Has warrants out for their arrest because in prison they had a traffic ticket, became a failure to pay, failure to appear, with a warrant. All of these administrative law problems, we start listening to them and said, okay, let's innovate. We found out there was no legal support for these guys. So we pulled all our law firms in Newark together to create the nation's first pro bono legal service project. And we said to the law firms, help us stop crime. A little bit of administrative law help can help these guys. It was amazing. The law firms found that their associates were loving it, because the liberated the economic potential of guys, helping them expunge records, get driver's licenses and IDs. We said, look at these guys, they're coming out and they need rapid attachment to work. This is a bad economy.

But let's find out ways to get them attached to work. We've done everything in Newark from partnering with businesses to start a niche in our city. We didn't have any fumigation businesses based in Newark. We started solely for the purpose of hiring guys when they come home. It's called Pest at Rest. I did not think of the name.

We realize guys, there's got to be a better marketer in this room, please. It sounds like a spa for bugs. We

found out that guys coming home, that one of the biggest things they said they wanted to be, imagine this, was great fathers. But yet they were often absentee fathers. And you talk to them about why that was, and there were logical reasons that they had for not being involved in their kids' lives. So we created a partnership program with these guys where we brought in other men to be mentors to the guys, fathers being mentors to other fathers. We actually created a fraternity of men around it. It wasn't in a fraternity at Stanford, but I wanted to create one, so we created Delta Alpha Delta Sigma, DADS.

And we had parenting classes. I learned how to be a dad even though my parents are saying, why aren't you one. I learned how, because at 5:00 in the morning, when I was in first grade, the first sound I would hear on a snow day was my dad shoveling snow, because he was going to get to work. We started having group activities for the women, and helped the men negotiated child support payments, took care of everything, and before you knew it, we had this program that now over five years has a recidivism rate not where New Jersey's is, about 65%. It has a recidivism rate lower than 3%. We have a program now, a one-stop center, partially funded by the Manhattan Institute.

I got a right-leaning think tank in New York, partnering with grass-roots activists who can't say the word Republican without gagging, but partnering in Newark city hall with a program right now that for the men that come to our -- men and women who come to our program, we have a 70% placement rate for jobs, working with local companies. That one small aspect of our program has saved the state of New Jersey millions of dollars. We are Americans. There is nothing we can't do. But we allow ourselves to get caught in the grooves of a record playing the same old tired song over and over again, surrendering our power, surrendering our authority, surrendering our responsibility.

In fact, we get into a state of what I call sedentary agitation, where we see the kids shot on TV and inner city. We're upset about it, but we take no responsibility for it. We don't get up and do something about it. We fail to say that our destiny is fully linked up with the destiny of another American. And I know it is. Go

to Google and put in the words, "McKinsey disparity education." A report will pop up, a 2009 McKinsey report, where they looked at the impact in America of the disparities of educational outcomes alone.

They said the impact on GDP alone is about 1.3 to 2.3 trillion dollars, trillion dollars.

You see, something I know is that genius is equally distributed in America, equally distributed. You'll find it

everywhere from inner cities to suburbs, from farm areas, and that our greatest natural resource as a nation is the minds of our children. But yet we've rolled them away in more of a gross offense than the oil spill in the Gulf. And the reason why I get excited about this problem is because we've shown ways of solving it. I could take you to Newark, New Jersey, right now, and show you schools in my city that are outperforming the wealthiest suburbs.

The answers are there. The question is, do we have the will? I talked to the Ford Foundation and they're, like, we've spent lots of money in investment, but we know some of the things that actually work. We're doing them in Newark now. Some of our schools just take simple equations. Like, when I was going to school, time was a constant, achievement was the variable. You go to school 180 days in New Jersey. If there's a snow day, they're going to smack another one on. Even if we were, like I was, in Harrington Park Elementary, sitting in the cafeteria watching reruns of *The Little Rascals*.

You're going to be in that building 180 days. Look at contracts for teachers and principals, it's all about time. My highest-performing schools in Newark have switched that equation around and said that achievement is going to be the constant; time is going to be the variable. They go to school, longer school days, longer school weeks. We have Saturday classes, mandatory Saturday classes. Longer school years. And funny enough, that's what our competitor nations are doing.

The answers are out there. Whether in reforming our criminal justice system, I can tell you from all over our country, incredible things in innovations are going on. In education, we see things that are working

but we are lacking the political will, the collective will, the individual will. I'm a mayor of a big city. I have

got a lot of things to do. But I see it all the time. If every American who was able just mentored a kid -- You can actually do online mentoring now. All mentoring, I have seen study after study shows you drive down the level of criminal activity. You drive down the level of early sex practices.

You drive up the success of schools. But, yet, we as Americans, who drink deeply from wells of freedom and liberty that we did not dig, we lavishly eat from banquet tables that were prepared for us by our ancestors. We are too often just sitting around getting drunk on the sacrifice and struggle of other people's labors and forgetting that we are a part of a noble mission in humanity, the first nation formed not as a monarchy, not as a theocracy but as an experiment, an idea that a diverse group of people, that when we come together, *e pluribus unum*, that we can make a greater whole out of the sum of our parts. So here we are, standing at a crossroads in our country.

We are cannibalizing ourselves by segregating our populations: Poor and not poor; educational access and lack thereof; high-crime areas, spending more and more money; and finding ways to liberate people from these dead-ends of life, from the carnage of human potential. And to me it is a choice, just like every moment of our life is. We either choose to accept conditions as they are or take responsibility for changing them. Well, I know what our history is. I know what the calling of our ancestors is. And so I will

end, and I'm looking forward to our panel with a poem that I've begun to say more and more, that my parents would read to me as a child, as they would tell me the stories of how lucky I was to be born where I was, how lucky I was to have the opportunities I have, how the experience I was having as a young Black man in America was a dangerous dream to my grandparents when they were growing up. My parents read me this poem from Langston Hughes: O let America be America again. The land that never has been yet but yet must be the land where everyone is free, the poor man, the Indian, the Negro, me. Who made America? Whose sweat and blood, whose faith and pain, whose hand at the foundry, whose plow in the rain must make our mighty dream live again? Oh, yes, I say it plain. America never was

America to me. But I swear this oath, America will be.

Our generation must say collectively not on our watch. This will not be the generation with more people in poverty than our parents. This will not be the generation with lower literacy rates than our parents. This will not be the generation where our economy declines in comparison to the rest of the world. We know we have the capacity. But as our leaders have said, there can be no progress without struggle. As King said, change will not roll in on the wheels of inevitability. It must be carried in by patriots and soldiers

for truth and justice and, I say, the American way.

Thank you.



Deepika Padukone

Mental Health

Interviewer: You're an actress, you're a film producer... but more importantly for us, a mental health advocate and a successful one, and you have done a lot. I was saying to your colleagues, the Triple L Foundation - The Live, Love and Laugh.

As you know, the very definition of health is health is a state of complete mental, physical and social wellbeing. It's not merely an absence of disease or infirmity.

But as you also know, mental health is the most neglected and people with mental health face severe human rights violations, stigma and discrimination. But only that. Around 80% of them, people with mental health conditions, do not have access to the mental health care they need.

So the problem is really, really serious and for someone like Deepika to really take on this big cause is, for

WHO, such a great opportunity and for me today a great opportunity, too. People like you, like Deepika, will really change the tide and I hope this moment will also increase the awareness, improve the awareness and help people think about the innermost problem we are facing, especially with mental health, and decide to join your movement.

So having said this and congratulating you for all your achievements and expressing my respect - for people maybe who may not be familiar with what you're doing. You're a very strong advocate of mental health, but what triggered that? Why?

Deepika: Thank you for that lovely introduction and good afternoon everybody. Mental illness crept up on

me when I least expected it. I think most often, or at least in my case, it comes with absolutely no warning signs and I was going through a phase that the perception and the general understanding was that I was at a professional high.

I'd had successful consecutive hits professionally at the movies. I was in an amazing relationship. My parents and my sister have always been extremely supportive of everything that I have done in my life. And so everything that we think should be okay in our lives was going more than okay. It was absolutely perfect. And I remember waking up, just one morning, leading an absolutely normal - or what I thought was

normal -- It started with -- I fell. I fainted. There was a complete blackout. I fainted. I hit my head -- And I

used to live alone at this time and luckily the house help had arrived and she saw me lying on the floor and sort of revived me and then I gained consciousness.

I sort of slept through the day. I got an appointment with a general practitioner. I went and saw him. He said, "Oh, it's nothing. It was probably just exhaustion or your BP just fluctuated" and that was it. That was sort of the physical symptom.

But what I was also experiencing was this sort of hollow, sort of empty pit-ish feeling in my stomach. I would break into a sweat every now and then. I would just suddenly get into these sort of panic phases where I just felt like I needed to just get out and gasp for breath and I would just cry. Like out of nowhere, I would just break down and cry.

There was no one who really had to say anything to me or I didn't necessarily have to be in a specific place. I would just -- You know, I could be in this room and suddenly just feel like I need to cry and express

myself. You know? And then there were days when I just didn't want to get out of bed. I would just want to sleep and not wake up, because to me sleep felt like my escape and I felt like I didn't have to deal with the reality of what I was experiencing.

I didn't want to eat. I didn't want to interact with anybody. I didn't want to go to work. I had lost motivation with absolutely everything. Fortunately, my mother happened to be there a couple of months into this. My parents live in a different city and they had come to visit. I was sitting in their room and they were packing up and ready to leave and I had one of those moments where I was just watching her pack and I suddenly just broke down.

She looked at me and she said "What happened? Is everything okay?" and I said that yes everything was okay, but clearly everything was not okay. She asked me the routine questions about is it my relationship, is it something at work and I just kept saying no and I didn't know. What was that one thing? I couldn't point my finger at it.

And she immediately looked at me and said "Deepika, I think you need professional help" and that's when we called Anna Chandy, who at the point was a family friend but also a trained psychologist. But at that point, we felt like we wanted to share this with somebody who we could trust and someone who was not going to -- We were concerned about what the media was going to say and we didn't want to be seen outside of a psychiatric clinic. So everything was hush hush.

I remember calling up Anna. She was in the middle of a personal crisis. She was travelling. And I called her

and literally she asked me two questions and she said "I am flying down to see you right away. You need professional help. You need to see a psychiatrist".

Immediately, I think literally that same evening or the next day, she was on a flight. She came to see me. We then together went to another doctor who finally diagnosed it as clinical depression. And I remember having, after struggling for so many months of having to go about the motions of doing everything, going about my professional engagements, having to speak at events, having to perform scenes, having to engage with people and having to do all of those things but actually not being present. I remember feeling a sense of relief; that "Wow!" At least now we know what this is that I was experiencing, because I think that the toughest part in the journey for me was not understanding what I was feeling or not understanding what I was experiencing and not being able to explain to people what it is that I am feeling.

So if people would say "Hey, how have you been?" I would have to lie and say "I've been great! I'm fine", when actually I was not feeling okay because I didn't have the strength and I didn't have the words to explain to somebody what I was experiencing.

So just the diagnosis in itself to me felt like a massive relief. At least now we knew what this was. But I think this is where my journey to recovery began, because I think accepting what Dr. Shyam Bhat told me was equally an important part of my journey to recovery and I think what I see around me very, very often is two things.

For example, when my mother said "I think you need help" I could have easily rejected that and said "No, mom. That's crazy. This doesn't make any sense. I am not seeking professional help" - A. B - The other situation could have been my mother could have completely discouraged me from seeking professional

help.

So I think the two things that we managed to achieve here as a family is - one - the fact that somebody close to me, within my family, recognized the signs and symptoms - one. Two - encouraged me to seek help. Three - that I was open to the idea of seeking help and I accepted the fact that OK, if our body is sort of susceptible to illness, so can the mind and I think that's when I understood the importance of the mind and the body and understanding that in the same way that we take care of our physical health it's equally important for us to take care of our emotional health and our mental health.

And then of course that's how my journey to recovery began. It was during that time I realized that there was a lot of stigma, there was a lot of hush hush and there was a lot of not wanting to share with too many people what I was experiencing; and I think all of those experiences made me reflect on why we were behaving - including myself - why we were behaving a certain way.

Why was I not telling somebody that I am not feeling okay emotionally? Why is it that I was seeking professional help privately? Why was I not confident enough to do this publicly and with people supporting me? That's okay. And it was all of those experiences that made me think and reflect and say "One second". I took a step back and I said, "Why have I and why have we gone about it this way?"

And I think that's when I realized the stigma and the lack of awareness that's associated with mental health and mental illness and that's what led me to come out publicly with my experience with anxiety and clinical depression and subsequently setting up the Live, Love, Laugh Foundation because through that process I felt like --

-- You know, through an interview or through the press or through the foundation, if I was able to express the signs and symptoms that I experienced and if there was even one person in this room who identified with those signs and said "You know what? I am going through the exact same thing but I have not been able to put a finger on what it is that I am going through", I wanted to make that journey that I had been through of the unknown, of not understanding what I was going through. I wanted to help somebody who is probably in that same situation, not understanding what they are going through and probably help them understand their signs and symptoms and that was sort of the intention of going public with the illness and then also subsequently setting up the Live, Love, Laugh Foundation.

Interviewer: Thank you. I mean, that is so moving and one of the souls actually who saved herself. I think from your story many young people can learn. We are losing a lot - 800,000 a year. This is one of the largest killers of young people.

It's serious and that's why. So what would be your advice to young people on what they should do for themselves and what they should do to help others?

Deepika: I think there's a lot of things that the youth can do and I think that we can do as individuals. I think to begin with, just to become a little more aware as people.

So let me give this in two perspectives. One is say for someone like me who is experiencing anxiety and depression. I think if I feel certain signs and symptoms... whether it's restlessness, whether it's not being able to sleep, sleeping too much or lack of sleep, whether it's irregular --

-- Your eating patterns. Are you eating less or are you eating more? Are you feeling a sense of sadness or low for a prolonged period of time?

And I think it's very important to understand the difference between sadness and depression. Sadness is something that we all go through in our lives for various reasons. Death, failure of an exam, heartbreak. I think sadness is transient. Depression is not transient. I think depression sort of lasts for a much longer period of time and I think that's when you realize that "Okay. This is where I need to share. This is where I

need to express".

So for someone who is experiencing that, I think it's important at that very moment to share with

somebody that you are close to. It could be a friend. It could be a colleague. It could be a family member. It could be a sibling. But I think the first step really is to share with somebody around you how you are feeling.

I think for people around it's important to not just sort of dismiss it as attention seeking. It's important for us to feel empathy towards the person who is telling us something. I think we all have now a habit of asking each other how we're doing without really listening to whether we actually -- If I ask you how you are doing, am I actually interested in how you are doing, and would you be vulnerable enough to share with me how you are doing?

So I think all of those things. I think just in the way that we engage with people on a daily basis, sharing with each other, understanding from each other and then of course, seeking help. So it's important for caregivers to encourage those feeling certain signs and symptoms to seek professional help.

There is a lot of stigma, especially in our country, especially in India. There is a lot of stigma with regards to seeking professional help. Parents do not want to take their children to counselors or to psychiatric treatment because they are concerned about what other family members will think. They are concerned about what society will think. I have come across situations where there are people experiencing mental illness who want to seek help

but somewhere the family is not willing to allow them to do that; and sometimes it's the other way around where the parents want their children to seek professional help and the child is resistant to that. In my personal experience, I think acceptance of medication -- I think for me, it was a combination.

Again,

I am not someone who can prescribe and say "Yes, you should take medication" but I will say that in my personal experience it was a combination of taking medication as well as lifestyle changes that have led to where I am today, but it also a constant taking care of myself.

It is an illness that can come back. So I have to take care of myself on a daily basis. The amount I sleep, what I eat, exercise, mindfulness - all of those things are things that I still have to do on a regular basis to ensure that I don't go back into that dark world and dark space again.

Interviewer: Thank you. So together we hope to make a difference. Namaste.

Deepika: Namaste. Thank you.



Ellen DeGeneres

Be True To Yourself

Thank you, President Cowan, Mrs. President Cowen; distinguished guests, undistinguished guests, you know

who you are, honored faculty and creepy Spanish teacher. And thank you to all the graduating class of 2009,

I realize most of you are hungover and have splitting headaches and haven't slept since Fat Tuesday, but you can't graduate 'til I finish, so listen up.

When I was asked to make the commencement speech, I immediately said yes. Then I went to look up what

commencement meant which would have been easy if I had a dictionary, but most of the books in our house are Portia's, and they're all written in Australian. So I had to break the word down myself, to find out

the meaning.

Commencement: common, and cement, common cement. You commonly see cement on sidewalks.

Sidewalks have cracks, and if you step on a crack, you break your mother's back. So there's that. But I'm honored that you've asked me here to speak at your common cement.

I thought that you had to be a famous alumnus, alumini, aluminum, alumis; you had to graduate from this school. And I didn't go to college here, and I don't know if President Cowan knows, I didn't go to any college

at all, any college. And I'm not saying you wasted your time, or money, but look at me, I'm a huge celebrity.

Although I did graduate from the school of hard knocks, our mascot was the knockers. I spent a lot of time

here growing up. My mom worked at Newcomb and I would go there every time I needed to steal something out of her purse. But why am I here today? Clearly not to steal, you're too far away and I'd never

get away with it. I'm here because of you. Because I can't think of a more tenacious, more courageous graduating class. I mean, look at you all, wearing your robes. Usually when you're wearing a robe at 10 in the morning, it means you've given up. I'm here because I love New Orleans. I was born and raised here, I

spent my formative years here, and like you, while I was living here I only did laundry six times. When I finished school, I was completely lost and by school, I mean middle school, but I went ahead and finished high school anyway. And I really, I had no ambition; I didn't know what I wanted to do. I did everything from:

I shucked oysters, I was a hostess, I was a bartender, I was a waitress, I painted houses, I sold vacuum

cleaners; I had no idea and I thought I'd just finally settle in some job and I would make enough money to pay my rent, maybe have basic cable, maybe not, I didn't really have a plan, my point is that, by the time I was your age, I really thought I knew who I was but I had no idea. Like for example, when I was your age, I was dating men. So what I'm saying is, when you're older, most of you will be gay. Anyone writing this stuff down? Parents? Anyway, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and the way I ended up on this path was from a very tragic event. I was maybe nineteen, and my girlfriend at the time was killed in a car accident. And I passed the accident, and I didn't know it was her and I kept going and I found out shortly after that, it was her. And I was living in a basement apartment; I had no money; I had no heat, no air, I had a mattress on the floor and the apartment was infested with fleas. And I was soul-searching, I was like, why is she suddenly gone, and there are fleas here? I don't understand, there must be a purpose and wouldn't it be so convenient if we could pick up the phone and call God and ask these questions. And I started writing and what poured out of me was an imaginary conversation with God, which was one-sided and I finished writing it and I looked at it and I said to myself, and I hadn't even been doing stand-up, ever, there was no club in town. I said, "I'm going to do this on the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson" at the time he was the king "and I'm going to be the first woman in the history of the show to be called over to sit down." and several years later, I was the first woman in the history of the show, and only woman in the history of the show to sit down, because of that phone conversation with God that I wrote. And I started this path of stand-up and it was successful and it was great but it was hard because I was trying to please everybody and I had this secret that I was keeping, that I was gay. And I thought if people found out they wouldn't like me, they wouldn't laugh at me. Then my career turned into, I got my own sitcom, and that was very successful, another level of success. And I thought, what if they find out I'm gay, then they'll never watch, and this was a long time ago, this was when we just had white presidents but anyway, this was back many years ago and I finally decided that I was living with so much shame, and so much fear, that I just couldn't live that way anymore and I decided to come out and make it creative. And my character would come out at the same time, and it wasn't to make a political statement, it wasn't to do anything other than to free myself up from this heaviness that I was carrying around, and I just wanted to be honest. And I thought, "What's the worst that could happen? I can lose my career". I did. I lost my career. The show was cancelled after six years without even telling me; I read it in the paper. The phone didn't ring for three years. I had no offers. Nobody wanted to touch me at all. Yet, I was getting letters from kids that almost committed suicide, but didn't because of what I did. And I realized

that I had a purpose. And it wasn't just about me and it wasn't about celebrity, but I felt like I was being punished and it was a bad time, I was angry, I was sad, and then I was offered a talk show. And the people that offered me the talk show tried to sell it. And most stations didn't want to pick it up. Most people didn't want to buy it because they thought nobody would watch me. Really, when I look back on it, I wouldn't change a thing. I mean, it was so important for me to lose everything because I found out what the most important thing is, is to be true to yourself. Ultimately, that's what's gotten me to this place. I don't live in fear, I'm free; I have no secrets and I know I'll always be ok, because no matter what, I know who I am. So, in conclusion, when I was younger I thought success was something different. I thought when I grow up, I want to be famous. I want to be a star. I want to be in movies. When I grow up I want to see the world, drive nice cars, I want to have groupies. To quote the Pussycat Dolls. How many people thought it was "boobies", by the way? It's not, it's "groupies". But my idea of success is different today. And as you grow, you'll realize the definition of success changes. For many of you, today, success is being able to hold down 20 shots of tequila. For me, the most important thing in your life is to live your life with integrity and not to give into peer pressure to try to be something that you're not, to live your life as an honest and compassionate person, to contribute in some way. So to conclude my conclusion, follow your passion, stay true to yourself. Never follow anyone else's path, unless you're in the woods and you're lost and you see a path and by all means you should follow that. Don't give advice, it will come back and bite you in the ass. Don't take anyone's advice. So my advice to you is to be true to yourself and everything will be fine. And I know that a lot of you are concerned about your future, but there's no need to worry. The economy is booming, the job market is wide open, the planet is just fine. It's going to be great. You've already survived a hurricane. What else can happen to you? And as I mentioned before, some of the most devastating things that happen to you will teach you the most. And now you know the right questions to ask in your first job interview. Like, "Is it above sea level?" So to conclude my conclusion that I've previously concluded, in the common cement speech, I guess what I'm trying to say is life is like one big Mardi Gras. But instead of showing your boobs, show people your brain, and if they like what they see, you'll have more beads than you know what to do with and you'll be drunk, most of the time. So the Katrina class of 2009, I say congratulations and if you don't remember a thing I said today, remember this, you're going to be ok, dum de dum dum, just dance.



Kevin Hart

Be Persistent

Daniel: You're one of the most successful comedians in the world. You have built your career on comedy. I am curious, what made you want to do a more serious role?

Kevin: You know, just to show growth. I think with anything in life, you always want to progress. Having the opportunity to step outside of my comfort zone of comedy and making a segue into what can be considered the world of dramatic acting, but done in a way that where my following can be a part of the journey of me eventually going over there.

This was a baby step, you know? This is a more dramatic role, but there is still some comedy undertone to it. Very personable, grounded and authentic but just someone who had the chops to do it.

So the movie after this one will then be one I can be another level past this one. It can be a little more serious. But my fan base would have seen this one and said, "Okay, wow. We know that he can do it. We believe that he's going over here. Oh, I'm curious to see how he is in this one, too".

Daniel: So do you set 10-year goals? Five-year goals?

Kevin: 100%

Daniel: Really?

Kevin: 100%. I think you have to, with anything that you're doing, because that's your reward. Seeing that you can say things and watch those things become your reality is what puts you in a position to just keep going. Once you see, "Oh, wow. I said I was going to do this and I did it" -- And now that I am here, I'm not

done. I'm going to set five new goals!

And I can't wait to achieve these and have the same conversation with myself in years to come. It's just always -- It's playing a game with your own mental, I think, and that's why I love writing things down. That's why I love the vision board. That's why I love team meetings and conversation. There's just nothing

bad that can come out of them. It's only an upside, no pun intended with the movie. You know, I've been doing comedy and acting for years, but when I stepped on the set and I was with Bryan Cranston and Nicole Kidman, regardless of my level of success or my star, I was a sponge. I was willing to soak up as much information as possible.

I was listening, I was watching and pretty much taking away whatever I could from the moment of working with these two unbelievable people, you know? This is an amazing actress and an amazing actor. These are both -- They are at the top of their games. They are of the elite

So the fact that I'm in that company, I want to make sure that I put myself in the best position to be in the conversations that they are in, in years to come

Daniel: The path of your career is a really interesting one because you actually hit in big pretty early. You were in a Judd Apatow TV show, which I think people aspire to, and then Hollywood just kind of stopped working for you and you went on the road and started doing comedy and working your way back up and becoming big. And then when you came back to Hollywood, totally different Kevin Hart at that point.

Kevin: 100%. I did the shows, I worked with Judd and while working with Judd I found that -- You know,

it's so amazing to create, but I was like "This is not enough". Like, I'm not going to be able to take care of myself. I'm not going to be able to feed myself.

So I made a decision to go and focus on stand-up comedy. I said, "I know that this is here, but I can't just wait by the phone". I needed to go put myself in a position where I can create and where I can be active.

So I went and did stand-up comedy. I said, "I want to focus on my stand-up comedy".

Over the course of three and a half, four year, I built my fan base up. My fan base was now selling out all shows. So now I don't have to do comedy clubs because now I can do little theaters. Now, I've built all of this up, by just being persistent and saying "Idle time is an idle mind".

Daniel: So, this whole time you're making these tours, is Hollywood calling you also or are you starting to,

and did you turn down work that would have brought you back?

Kevin: Well, it wasn't like I was turning down a crazy amount of work because it wasn't coming in.

Daniel: All right... but you were able to stay focused.

Kevin: I was not only focused, I was just determined to make you realize what I am, because I know what I

am. Nobody else knows what you are but you. You are your own competition, and when I've realized what I was, I was like, there's no shot at me losing focus. There's no shot at me not finishing the job at hand. By the time I'm done, Hollywood is going to go, "Woah, that guy's out there moving tickets. Who is this new star?" Keep in mind... I've been around for years.

They don't know me and they don't have any real reason to, but now I'm going to force your hand. I'm going to make you aware. That's the beauty of stand-comedy.

Daniel: I've read something you said before where you talk about not wanting to be work for hire, that during this process you realized that you were the product and you wanted to own the product.

How did you come to that realization and what has that meant in terms of how you guide your career?

Kevin: You know.... If you need me, you need me. If you don't, you don't. That's not good, you know? How

am I going to really support those around me? How do I position myself to be so much more than that?

How do I learn? Where am I supposed to figure it out?

I went out and I used some examples. Will Packer was doing a bunch of movies and he was producing them. He approached me to produce a movie that he wanted to do and he was like, "Kevin, this is something that's dear to my heart. I want to do it, I would love for you to be in it. You can star in it. I think

it'll be great for you."

Alright, dope. I want to do it, but then I watched him. I watched how he put stuff together, and doing that I was like, I can do that. I can do what he's going. I've already got the infrastructure. I've already got the company set up. I've got the office building. I could easily get the rest of the buildings. I could easily get space -- because I've got money from stand-up. My money from stand-up can help me leverage and do the things that I want to do.

Once I figured out how to get HartBeat Productions running and off the ground, things started to click so much easier because --

Daniel: Was that the turning point, starting your own company?

Kevin: Yeah! Well, because now I'm producing for me.

Oh, my God. This is huge. It clicked - and when it clicked, it kept clicking - because now I know how to add

onto it. Now I know how to get more deals. Now I know how to not only develop, produce -- I also know

how to engage.

Daniel: What are you like as a manager? Are you a hands-on guy? Do you build this --

Kevin: Hands on.

Daniel: Really?

Kevin: Hands on.

Daniel: Like daily meetings, monthly?

Kevin: Hands on.

Daniel: You're following? You're looking at the spreadsheets? You're seeing what's going on inside the business?

Kevin: Hands on.

Daniel: You're hiring? Really?

Kevin: Hands on.

Daniel: Do you like doing all that?

Kevin: I like it because right now it's my baby.

Daniel: Right.

Kevin: I'm watching it evolve because I'm putting the pieces to the puzzle in place. I'm hiring the right people. I'm having the people that I hire feel comfortable enough to know that they are a part of something that's much, much bigger. Much, much bigger.

Daniel: You've spent a lot of this week talking about the Oscars controversy. You talk about helping out young comedians and guiding the way for them. What lessons should they take out of what you've just been through?

Kevin: Take a lesson from what I've been through? Just pay attention. Pay attention, man. Just -- One man's misfortune is another man's fortune, you know? There's a lesson learned in all of this for everyone and it's just -- It's very easy for things to go away. It's hard to achieve them. It's very hard to get there, but it's easy for it to go away.

And you're living in a time where, because it's so easy, you have to just be careful. Just make sure that you're always handling yourself correctly, you know? You're not going to be perfect. Nobody is perfect. Nobody is perfect, but within your imperfections come perfection. So give yourself time to grow and understand the state of the world today. It's different. It's different.

But also - be true to you! That's another thing that I will say, you know? Be true to you. Don't let other people dictate who you are and what you should be. I think we're all smart enough to know right from wrong and we're all smart enough to fix whatever the wrong is to make it right. In doing so, do it while staying true to you.

Daniel: That's a hard line to walk, right? You have to be true to yourself but also think about --

Kevin: It's a very thin line, because you can easily get off-balance.

Daniel: Right.

Kevin: But as long as you're conscious and aware of it, you know, you'll be okay. That's what I'll say. You

know, just be aware, man. Be aware. But I will say that it only gets tougher as you get bigger.

Daniel: Right.

Kevin: But there is an approach to still trying to be edgy.

You're a comedian. If you're a comedian, you're supposed to be able to say the things that other people think, but they won't say. In you doing that, you know have to just make sure you're doing that, you're doing it correctly. Make sure that there's a high level of professionalism.

And if you are a comic that chooses to go down that insensitive road, just understand that there is going to be backlash for it and be prepared for that. If that's what you want, and that's who you want to be, then by all means do it. I'm not here to change you. Do it.

I'm not here to change you at all, but just be smart in your approach to it. I would say I think that's the dopest thing about my change, is that I have done that and that's why I have decided just to be done with the situation because the change came in the last ten years that acts as proof of somebody that got it, understood and adjusted it and adapted it to the times of today.

Daniel: You must get people that come to you all the time that are like, "Hey, I'm working in a fast food job" or "I'm working this job which I hate and I really want to be a comedian" or "I want to be an actor". What kind of advice do you tell them?

Kevin: That's tough, man. That's tough.

Daniel: Do you say "Don't do it?"

Kevin: No! You definitely don't say that. I'm not a dream killer. I just don't like talkers. So many people love to say what they are going to do. So many people love to voice it, just so they can hear themselves say it.

"Yeah man, you know what I'm thinking about doing today? I'm probably going to go and --" or "Hey, you

know what, man? I just started this. Probably tomorrow, I'll get up in the morning and go down and do some --" Just like to hear yourself say it.

Daniel: Right.

Kevin: It's so hard for some people to follow through and actually put action behind the words. So my advice is not be a talker because you can. Be the person that actually puts action behind it.

And when you know that you're that person, then start picking people apart for advice and direction and what to do and what not to do, because you know that you're going to take it and you're going to apply it. But when you don't know if you're even capable of taking information and going and using it, don't ask for it.

So my advice is to not be a talker. Be a doer. Be a person that wants to put punctuations on sentences, not just keep running them on. Run-on sentences are the worst. They just don't stop. It's like, where's

your period? You didn't put a period on one sentence. Finish something. You've got to finish something.

Daniel: All right. Well Kevin, thank you very much.

Kevin: Thank you so much.



Mark Zuckerberg

Find Your purpose

President Faust, Board of Overseers, faculty, alumni, friends, proud parents, members of the ad board, and graduates of the greatest university in the world. I'm honored to be with you today because, let's face it, you accomplished something I never could. If I get through this speech, it'll be the first time I actually finish something at Harvard. Class of 2017, congratulations!

I'm an unlikely speaker, not just because I dropped out, but because we're technically in the same generation. We walked this yard less than a decade apart, studied the same ideas and slept through the same Ec10 lectures. We may have taken different paths to get here, especially if you came all the way from the Quad, but today I want to share what I've learned about our generation and the world we're building together.

But first, the last couple of days have brought back a lot of good memories. How many of you remember exactly what you were doing when you got that email telling you that you got into Harvard? I was playing Civilization and I ran downstairs, got my dad, and for some reason, his reaction was to video me opening the email. That could have been a really sad video. I swear getting into Harvard is still the thing my parents are most proud of me for.

What about your first lecture at Harvard? Mine was Computer Science 121 with the incredible Harry Lewis. I was late so I threw on a t-shirt and didn't realize until afterwards it was inside out and backwards with my tag sticking out the front. I couldn't figure out why no one would talk to me—except one guy, KX Jin, he just went with it. We ended up doing our problem sets together, and now he runs a big part of Facebook. And that, Class of 2017, is why you should be nice to people.

But my best memory from Harvard was meeting Priscilla. I had just launched this prank website Facemash, and the ad board wanted to “see me”. Everyone thought I was going to get kicked out. My parents came to help me pack. My friends threw me a going-away party. As luck would have it, Priscilla was at that party with her friend. We met in line for the bathroom in the Pfoho Belltower, and in what must be one of the all-

time

romantic lines, I said: “I’m going to get kicked out in three days, so we need to go on a date quickly.”

Actually, any of you graduating can use that line.

I didn’t end up getting kicked out—I did that to myself. Priscilla and I started dating. And, you know, that movie made it seem like Facemash was so important to creating Facebook. It wasn’t. But without

Facemash

I wouldn’t have met Priscilla, and she’s the most important person in my life, so you could say it was the President Faust, Board of Overseers, faculty, alumni, friends, proud parents, members of the ad board, and

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I wouldn't have met Priscilla, and she's the most important person in my life, so you could say it was the Facebook.

Movies and pop culture get this all wrong. The idea of a single eureka moment is a dangerous lie. It makes

us feel inadequate since we haven't had ours. It prevents people with seeds of good ideas from getting started.

Oh, you know what else movies get wrong about innovation? No one writes math formulas on glass. That's not a thing.

It's good to be idealistic. But be prepared to be misunderstood. Anyone working on a big vision will get called crazy, even if you end up right. Anyone working on a complex problem will get blamed for not fully understanding the challenge, even though it's impossible to know everything upfront. Anyone taking initiative will get criticized for moving too fast, because there's always someone who wants to slow you down.

In our society, we often don't do big things because we're so afraid of making mistakes that we ignore all the things wrong today if we do nothing. The reality is, anything we do will have issues in the future. But that can't keep us from starting.

So what are we waiting for? It's time for our generation-defining public works. How about stopping climate

change before we destroy the planet, and getting millions of people involved manufacturing and installing solar panels? How about curing all diseases and asking volunteers to track their health data and share their genomes? Today we spend 50x more treating people who are sick than we spend finding cures so people don't get sick in the first place. That makes no sense. We can fix this. How about modernizing democracy so

everyone can vote online, and personalizing education so everyone can learn?

These achievements are within our reach. Let's do them all in a way that gives everyone in our society a role. Let's do big things, not only to create progress, but to create purpose. So taking on big meaningful projects is the first thing we can do to create a world where everyone has a sense of purpose.

The second is redefining equality to give everyone the freedom they need to pursue purpose. Many of our parents had stable jobs throughout their careers. Now we're all entrepreneurial, whether we're starting projects or finding a role. And that's great. Our culture of entrepreneurship is how we create so much progress.

Now, an entrepreneurial culture thrives when it's easy to try lots of new ideas. Facebook wasn't the first thing I built. I also built games, chat systems, study tools and music players. I'm not alone. JK Rowling got

rejected 12 times before publishing Harry Potter. Even Beyonce had to make hundreds of songs to get "Halo." The greatest successes come from having the freedom to fail.

But today, we have a level of wealth inequality that hurts everyone. When you don't have the freedom to take your idea and turn it into a historic enterprise, we all lose. Right now our society is way over-indexed on

rewarding success and we don't do nearly enough to make it easy for everyone to take lots of shots. Let's face it. There is something wrong with our system when I can leave here and make billions of dollars in 10 years while millions of students can't afford to pay off their loans, let alone start a business.

Look, I know a lot of entrepreneurs, and I don't know a single person who gave up on starting a business because they might not make enough money. But I know lots of people who haven't pursued dreams because they didn't have a cushion to fall back on if they failed.

We all know we don't succeed just by having a good idea or working hard. We succeed by being lucky too. If

I had to support my family growing up instead of having time to code, if I didn't know I'd be fine if Facebook

didn't work out, I wouldn't be standing here today. If we're honest, we all know how much luck we've had.

Every generation expands its definition of equality. Previous generations fought for the vote and civil rights.

They had the New Deal and Great Society. Now it's our time to define a new social contract for our generation.

We should have a society that measures progress not just by economic metrics like GDP, but by how many

of us have a role we find meaningful. We should explore ideas like universal basic income to give everyone a

cushion to try new things. We're going to change jobs many times, so we need affordable child care to get to work and health care that aren't tied to one company. We're all going to make mistakes, so we need a society that focuses less on locking us up or stigmatizing us. And as technology keeps changing, we need to

focus more on continuous education throughout our lives.

And yes, giving everyone the freedom to pursue purpose isn't free. People like me should pay for it.

Many of

you will do well and you should too.

That's why Priscilla and I started the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative and committed our wealth to promoting equal opportunity. These are the values of our generation. It was never a question of if we were going to do

this. The only question was when.

Millennials are already one of the most charitable generations in history. In one year, three of four US millennials made a donation and seven out of ten raised money for charity.

But it's not just about money. You can also give time. I promise you, if you take an hour or two a week—that's all it takes to give someone a hand, to help them reach their potential.

Maybe you think that's too much time. I used to. When Priscilla graduated from Harvard she became a teacher, and before she'd do education work with me, she told me I needed to teach a class. I complained: "Well, I'm kind of busy. I'm running this company." But she insisted, so I taught a middle-school

program on

entrepreneurship at the local Boys and Girls Club.

I taught them lessons on product development and marketing, and they taught me what it's like feeling targeted for your race and having a family member in prison. I shared stories from my time in school, and they shared their hope of one day going to college too. For five years now, I've been having dinner with those kids every month. One of them threw me and Priscilla our first baby shower. And next year they're going to college. Every one of them. First in their families.

We can all make time to give someone a hand. Let's give everyone the freedom to pursue their purpose—not only because it's the right thing to do, but because when more people can turn their dreams into something great, we're all better for it.

Purpose doesn't only come from work. The third way we can create a sense of purpose for everyone is by building community. And when our generation says "everyone," we mean everyone in the world.

Quick show of hands: How many of you are from another country? Now, how many of you are friends with

one of these folks? Now we're talking. We have grown up connected.

In a survey asking millennials around the world what defines our identity, the most popular answer wasn't nationality, religion or ethnicity, it was "citizen of the world". That's a big deal. Every generation expands the

circle of people we consider "one of us." For us, it now encompasses the entire world.

We understand the great arc of human history bends towards people coming together in ever greater

numbers—from tribes to cities to nations—to achieve things we couldn't on our own.

We get that our greatest opportunities are now global—we can be the generation that ends poverty, that ends disease. We get that our greatest challenges need global responses too—no country can fight climate change alone or prevent pandemics. Progress now requires coming together not just as cities or nations, but

also as a global community.

But we live in an unstable time. There are people left behind by globalization across the world. It's hard to

care about people in other places if we don't feel good about our lives here at home. There's pressure to turn inwards.

This is the struggle of our time. The forces of freedom, openness and global community against the forces of

authoritarianism, isolationism, and nationalism. Forces for the flow of knowledge, trade and immigration against those who would slow them down. This is not a battle of nations, it's a battle of ideas. There are people in every country for global connection and good people against it.

This isn't going to be decided at the UN either. It's going to happen at the local level, when enough of us feel

a sense of purpose and stability in our own lives that we can open up and start caring about everyone. The best way to do that is to start building local communities right now.

We all get meaning from our communities. Whether our communities are houses or sports teams, churches

or music groups, they give us that sense we are part of something bigger, that we are not alone; they give us

the strength to expand our horizons.

That's why it's so striking that for decades, membership in all kinds of groups has declined as much as one-quarter. That's a lot of people who now need to find purpose somewhere else.

But I know we can rebuild our communities and start new ones because many of you already are.

I met Agnes Igoye, who's graduating today. Where are you, Agnes? She spent her childhood navigating conflict zones in Uganda, and now she trains thousands of law-enforcement officers to keep communities safe.

I met Kayla Oakley and Niha Jain, graduating today, too. Stand up. Kayla and Niha started a nonprofit that

connects people suffering from illnesses with people in their communities willing to help.

I met David Razu Aznar, graduating from the Kennedy School today. David, stand up. He's a former city councilor who successfully led the battle to make Mexico City the first Latin American city to pass marriage

equality—even before San Francisco.

This is my story too. A student in a dorm room, connecting one community at a time, and keeping at it until

one day we connect the whole world.

Change starts local. Even global changes start small—with people like us. In our generation, the struggle of

whether we connect more, whether we achieve our biggest opportunities, comes down to this—your ability

to build communities and create a world where every single person has a sense of purpose.

Class of 2017, you are graduating into a world that needs purpose. It's up to you to create it. Now, you may

be thinking: Can I really do this?

Remember when I told you about that class I taught at the Boys and Girls Club? One day after class I was talking to them about college, and one of my top students raised his hand and said he wasn't sure he could go because he's undocumented. He didn't know if they'd let him in.

Last year I took him out to breakfast for his birthday. I wanted to get him a present, so I asked him and he started talking about students he saw struggling and said, "You know, I'd really just like a book on social justice."

I was blown away. Here's a young guy who has every reason to be cynical. He didn't know if the country he

calls home—the only one he's known—would deny him his dream of going to college. But he wasn't feeling

sorry for himself. He wasn't even thinking of himself. He has a greater sense of purpose, and he's going to

bring people along with him.

It says something about our current situation that I can't even say his name because I don't want to put him

at risk. But if a high-school senior who doesn't know what the future holds can do his part to move the world forward, then we owe it to the world to do our part too.

Before you walk out those gates one last time, as we sit in front of Memorial Church, I am reminded of a prayer, Mi Shebeirach, that I say whenever I face a challenge, that I sing to my daughter thinking about her

future when I tuck her into bed. It goes: "May the source of strength, who blessed the ones before us, help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing."

I hope you find the courage to make your life a blessing.

Congratulations, Class of '17! Good luck out there.



Mindy Kaling

Why Not Me?

Good morning to the Class of 2018, the faculty, the parents, the grandparents, fellow honorees, and the paid laughers I have scattered throughout the audience.

It is an honor to join you this morning for this special occasion.

It is also an honor to speak to you today from behind this gigantic tree stump. Like some sort of female Lorax with an advanced degree. That's right, you guys; I'm hitting Dr. Seuss hard and early in this speech.

Because Dartmouth grads have a privilege unique among all the Ivy League: We will be forced to be miniexperts on Dr. Seuss for our entire lives.

On my deathbed, I'll be saying, "Did you know that his real name was Theodor Geisel? Did you know he was

editor of the Dartmouth Jack-O-Lantern?" And yes, while no U.S. Presidents have gone to Dartmouth, we can at least lay claim for the wonderful Dr. Seuss.

Another notable alumnus is Salmon P. Chase, the man on the \$10,000 bill. A symbolically powerful piece of

paper that's largely useless in the real world. Like a degree in playwriting which I received from this very institution. Thank you for paying for that, Mom and Dad!

It's a thrill to be back here in New Hampshire, the Granite State, known for two things: the place where you

can legally not wear your seatbelt, and Adam Sandler's birthplace.

New Hampshire has one of the best mottos of any state: "Live Free or Die." For outsiders, it sounds like an

exciting declaration of freedom; but when you're here in January, "die" actually sounds like a pretty good option.

I remember the days when it was so cold your sneeze would become an ice sculpture before it hit the ground. In Los Angeles, where I live now, if I sneeze, I just call my doctor and have my blood replaced with

that of a teenage track star. That's normal there. I'm mostly track star right now.

Before I get any further, I should actually probably clarify who I am for the parents and grandparents in the

audience who are thinking to themselves, "Who is this loud Indian woman? Is that the girl from Quantico?

She looks so much worse in person."

No, no, I'm not Priyanka Chopra, not even Padma Lakshmi. I'm the other Indian woman we have allowed to

be on television, Mindy Kaling. Thank you, thank you. You may remember me from my role on *The Office* as Kelly Kapoor, who internet commenters said was—
 quote—“shrill” and—quote—“took up valuable time that could have gone to Steve Carell.”
 I then created and starred in my own TV show, *The Mindy Project*. Thank you, thank you very much. It was
 an uphill battle to get the show on the air, but it was worth it, because it enabled me to become
 Dartmouth’s most successful female minority show creator who has spoken at commencement!
 Oh wait, no. Shonda Rhimes went here. Yup, and she’s created like 10 more shows than me, so great. No,
 cool. Cool, cool, cool, Shonda. Friggin’ role model, good for you.
 But today is not about famous alumni. No, no. It’s about the men and women who have toiled in
 obscurity
 for years so that they might better our country. I speak, of course, of the 51 percent of Dartmouth grads
 who will go into finance—highest in the Ivy League! Look left. Look right. All three of you will be
 spending at
 least ten years in a white collar prison.
 I know that going into the real world sounds scary, but it’s exciting too. Finally, you’ll be in control of
 your
 own lives. No longer will there be an irrational Board of Trustees telling you you can’t have hard liquor
 on
 campus, for the ridiculous reason that they don’t want you to die. Come tomorrow, no one can stop you
 from filling your apartment with \$4.99 handles of Uncle Satan’s Unfiltered Potato Vodka. Go crazy.
 It’s a real moment of reflection for me to be standing here speaking to all of you now, because it makes
 me
 harken back to my own time at my Dartmouth graduation. Madeleine Albright was my commencement
 speaker; and while I don’t remember any specific quotes she said, or even a general gist of what she was
 talking about, I do remember thinking: “I wonder what it will be like to have my own cell phone?”
 How things have changed. For all I know, at this very moment, most of you are posting this speech on
 your
 Instagram stories with a GIF of Winnie the Pooh twerking. If you are, please at least use my official
 hashtag,
 MindyGoesBigGreenTwentyEighteen. Thank you.
 I bet none of you remember a time before the internet. Hell, you probably don’t even remember a time
 before the Facebook page, “Dartmouth Memes for Cold AF Teens.” Yeah, yeah. I know about that. Made
 me
 feel like a real creep researching it. “Hello, I’m a 38-year-old woman who wants to join your teen
 Facebook
 group. It’s for research, I swear!”
 Meanwhile, when I was in college we didn’t even have Google. If you wanted to find out, say, how tall
 Ben
 Affleck was, you were out of luck. You just had to sit there, not knowing, and your entire day would be
 ruined.
 Or, say I wanted to meet up with a friend—I couldn’t just text her. I had to walk outside and hope I
 accidentally bumped into her. Or, I “blitzed” her. Ah, BlitzMail. You know that feeling you have when
 you tell
 your friends that you “blitz” and they don’t get it and you roll your eyes all smug like “Oh, it’s a
 Dartmouth
 thing.” That ends today. You try to say “blitz” one hundred yards east of White River Junction and you

will

get laughed back to your one-room triple in the Choates Fun fact: In 2001, the year I graduated, a pinkeye epidemic broke out amongst my classmates because we were all using public BlitzMail iMac terminals and not washing our hands. Those are just the kind of the sexy

stories indicative of my time at Dartmouth.

You have so many cool new things here now. Like, look at the new logo, the D-Pine. It's beautiful. It reminds

me of what college-aged Mindy thought a marijuana leaf might look like but I was too scared to actually find

out. And this new House System sounds really cool! It's so Hogwarts-y! You know, you're sorted into your

little Gryffindors and Ravenclaws, except they're called ... South House. West House. School House.

Okay, come on guys. School House? Really? We're just saying what we see? That's the laziest name I've ever

heard in my life, and I've spent over a decade working on shows called The Office and The Mindy Project.

Still, I remember sitting where you're sitting. I was so full of questions like, "When is this thing going to end?" and "How many friends can I invite to dinner and still have mom and dad pay?" And, most importantly, "Why didn't I wear any clothes underneath my gown?"

Now we're reaching the part of the speech where I am supposed to tell you something uplifting like "follow

your dreams."

In general, advice isn't actually an effective way to change your life. If all it took to make your life great was

hearing amazing advice, then everyone who watched TED Talks would be a millionaire.

So don't trust any one story of how how to become successful. As Madeline Albright said at my Commencement—see, I don't remember anything. And I did just fine.

So here is some practical advice that you may or may not remember at the end of this speech because, hey,

that's the gig:

1. First off, remove "Proficient at Word" from your resume. That is ridiculous. You're really scraping the bottom of the barrel of competency there. This is how you become proficient at Word: You open Word on your computer.

2. Most of your post-college life is simply filling out forms. Car insurance, health insurance, W-2s. W-4s, 1099s. Guess what? None of us know what any of those forms mean, but you will fill out a hundred of them

before you die.

3. You never need more than one pancake. Trust me on this. Cartoons have trained us to want a giant stack

of those bad boys, but order one first and then just see how you feel later.

4. This one is just for guys: When you go on dates, act as if every woman you're talking to is a reporter for an

online publication that you are scared of. One shouldn't need the threat of public exposure and scorn to treat women well; but if that's what it's gonna take, fine. Date like everyone's watching, because we are.

5. And this might be the most important—buy a toilet plunger. Trust me on this. Don't wait until you need a

plunger to buy a plunger.

Commencement is a time of transition for parents, too. That empty nest you were enjoying these past four years? Gone as soon as this speech is over. I hope you like full-time lodgers who don't pay rent, don't do laundry, eat all the food in your fridge, and binge Family Guy on your sofa for weeks. That is your life now.

Although some of your graduates will be making more money than you—51% to be exact. And to the parents of those investment bankers, consultants, and hedge fund analysts—congratulations. Your kids will

be fabulously wealthy but still somehow sharing your cell phone plan because it—quote—“saves everybody money.”

Okay, now let's get real. Let me rip off the Band-Aid for all you, the '18s. Next year, the next year of your life

is going to be bad. You have been in the comfortable fleece-lined womb of mother Dartmouth for four years

now, and you're gonna go out in the cold, hard world.

Out there in the real world, there will be a target on your back. People will want to confirm their expectations of Ivy League graduates—that you're a jerk, that you're spoiled, that you use the word “summer” as a verb. Those stereotypes exist for a reason. I mean come on, the guy from the ten-thousand-dollar bill went to this school.

You're graduating into a world where it seems like everything is falling apart. Trust in institutions are at a record low; the truth doesn't seem to matter anymore; and for all I know, the president just tweeted us into

a war with Wakanda, a country that doesn't exist.

So, Class of 2018, you are entering a world that we have toppled—we have toppled—like a Jenga tower, and

we are relying on you to rebuild it.

But how can you do that with the knowledge that things are so unstable out there? I'll tell you my secret, the one thing that has kept me going through the years, my superpower: delusion.

This is something I may share with our president, a fact that is both horrifying and interesting. Two years in,

I think we can pretty safely say that he's not getting carved onto Mount Rushmore; but damn if that isn't a

testament to how far you can get just by believing you're the smartest, most successful person in the world.

My point is, you have to have insane confidence in yourself, even if it's not real. You need to be your own

cheerleader now, because there isn't a room full of people waiting with pom-poms to tell you, “You did it!

We've been waiting all this time for you to succeed!”

So, I'm giving you permission to root for yourself. And while you're at it, root for those around you, too. It

took me a long time to realize that success isn't a zero-sum game. Which leads me to the next part of my remarks. I thought I might take a second to speak to the ladies in the audience. (Guys, take a break; you don't have to

pay attention during this part. Maybe spend the next 30 seconds thinking about all the extra money you'll make in your life for doing the same job as a woman. Pretty sweet.)

Hey girls, we need to do a better job of supporting each other. I know that I am guilty of it too. We live in a

world where it seems like there's only room for one of us at the table. So when another woman shows up, we think, "Oh my god, she's going to take the one woman spot! That was supposed to be mine!"

But that's just what certain people want us to do! Wouldn't it be better if we worked together to dismantle a system that makes us feel like there's limited room for us? Because when women work together, we can accomplish anything. Even stealing the world's most expensive diamond necklace from the Met Gala, like in

Ocean's 8, a movie starring me, which opens in theaters June 8th. And to that end, women, don't be ashamed to toot your own horn like I just did.

Okay, guys, you can listen again. You didn't miss much. Just remember to see Ocean's 8, now playing in theaters nationwide. Ocean's 8: Every con has its pros.

Now I wanted to share a little bit about me, Mindy Kaling, the Dartmouth student. When I came to Hanover

in the fall of 1997, I was, as many of you were: driven, bright, ambitious, and really, really into The Black Eyed Peas.

I arrived here as a 17-year-old, took the lay of the land, and immediately began making a checklist of everything I wanted to accomplish. I told myself that by the time I graduated in 2001, I would have checked them all off.

And here was my freshman fall checklist: be on Hanover crew, on Lodge crew, be in an a cappella group, be

in an improv troupe, write a play that's performed at the Bentley, do a cartoon for the D, and try to be in a cool senior society. And guess what? I completed that checklist. But before you think: "Wait, why is this woman just bragging about her accomplishments from 17 years ago?"—keep listening.

Then, I graduated. And I made a new checklist for my twenties: get married by 27, have kids at 30, win an

Oscar, be the star of my own TV show, host the MTV Music Awards (this was 2001, guys; it made more sense then), and do it all while being a size 2.

Well, spoiler alert: I've only done one of those things, and I'm not sure I will ever do the others. And that is a

really scary feeling. Knowing how far that I've strayed from the person that I was hoping to be when I was 21.

I will tell you a personal story. After my daughter was born in December, I remember bringing her home and

being in my house with her for the first time and thinking, "Huh. According to movies and TV, this is traditionally the time when my mother and spouse are supposed to be here, sharing this experience with me." And I looked around, and I had neither. And for a moment, it was kind of scary. Like, "Can I do this by

myself?" But then, that feeling went away, because the reality is, I'm not doing it by myself. I'm surrounded by family

and friends who love and support me. And the joy I feel from being with my daughter Katherine eclipses anything from any crazy checklist.

So I just want to tell you guys, don't be scared if you don't do things in the right order, or if you don't do some things at all. I didn't think I'd have a child before I got married, but hey, it turned out that way, and I

wouldn't change a thing. I didn't think I'd have dessert before breakfast today, but hey, it turned out that way and I wouldn't change a thing.

So if I could impart any advice, it's this: If you have a checklist, good for you. Structured ambition can sometimes be motivating. But also, feel free to let it go. Yes, my culminating advice from my speech is a song from the Disney animated movie, Frozen.

I've covered a lot of ground today, not all of it was serious, but I wanted to leave you with this: I was not someone who should have the life I have now, and yet I do. I was sitting in the chair you are literally sitting

in right now and I just whispered, "Why not me?" And I kept whispering it for seventeen years; and here I am, someone that this school deemed worthy enough to speak to you at your Commencement.

Don't let anyone tell you that you can't do something, but especially not yourself. Go conquer the world.

Just remember this: Why not you? You made it this far.

Thank you very much, and congratulations to the Class of 2018.



Natalie Portman

Don't Doubt Yourself

Hello, class of 2015. I am so honored to be here today. Dean Khurana, faculty, parents, and most especially graduating students. Thank you so much for inviting me. The Senior Class Committee. It's genuinely one of the most exciting things I've ever been asked to do. I have to admit primarily because I can't deny it as it was leaked in the WikiLeaks release of the Sony hack that when I was invited, I replied, and I directly quote my own email, "wow! This is so nice! I'm gonna need some funny ghost writers. Any ideas?" This initial response, now blessedly public was from the knowledge that at my class day we were lucky enough to have Will Ferrell as class day speaker and many of us were hungover, or even freshly high, mainly wanted to laugh. So I have to admit that today even 12 years after graduation. I'm still insecure about my own worthiness. I have to remind myself today you're here for a reason. Today I feel much like I did when I came to Harvard Yard as a freshman in 1999. When you guys were, to my continued shock and horror, still in kindergarten. I felt like there had been some mistake that I wasn't smart enough to be in this company and that every time I opened my mouth, I would have to prove that I wasn't just a dumb actress. So I start with an apology. This won't be very funny. I'm not a comedian. And I didn't get a ghost writer. But I am here to tell you today. Harvard is giving you all diplomas tomorrow. You are here for a reason. Sometimes your insecurities and your inexperience may lead you, too, to embrace other people's expectations, standards, or values. But you can harness that inexperience to carve out your own path, one that is free of the burden of knowing how things are supposed to be, a path that is defined by its own particular set of reasons. The other day I went to an amusement park with my soon-to-be 4-year-old son. And I watched him play arcade games. He was incredibly focused, throwing his ball at the target. Jewish mother that I am, I skipped 20 steps and was already imagining him as a major league player with what is his aim and his arm and his concentration. But then I realized what he wanted. He was playing to trade in his tickets for the crappy plastic toy. The prize was much more exciting than the game to get it. I, of course, wanted to urge him to

take joy and the challenge of the game, the improvement upon practice, the satisfaction of doing something well, and even feeling the accomplishment when achieving the game's goals. But all of these aspects were shaded by the little 10-cent plastic men with sticky stretchy blue arms that adhere to the walls. That-that was the prize. In a child's nature, we see many of our own innate tendencies. I saw myself in him and perhaps you do, too.

Prizes serve as false idols everywhere, prestige, wealth, fame, power. You'll be exposed to many of these, if not all. Of course, part of why I was invited to come to speak today beyond my being a proud alumna is that I've recruited some very coveted toys in my life, including a not so plastic, not so crappy one: an Oscar. So we bump up against a common trope I think of the commencement address people who have achieved a lot telling you that the fruits of the achievement are not always to be trusted. But I think that contradiction can be reconciled and is in fact instructive. Achievement is wonderful when you know why you're doing it. And when you don't know, it can be a terrible trap.

I went to a public high school on Long Island, Syosset High School. Ooh, hello, Syosset! The girls I went to school with had Prada bags and flat-ironed hair. And they spoke with an accent I who had moved there at age 9 from Connecticut mimicked to fit in. Florida Oranges, Chocolate cherries. Since I'm ancient and the Internet was just starting when I was in high school, people didn't really pay that much of attention to the fact that I was an actress. I was known mainly at school for having a backpack bigger than I was and always having white-out on my hands because I hated seeing anything crossed out in my note books. I was voted for my senior yearbook "most likely to be a contestant on Jeopardy" or code for nerdiest.

When I got to Harvard just after the release of Star Wars: Episode 1, I knew I would be staring over in terms of how people viewed me. I feared people would have assumed I'd gotten in just for being famous, and that they would think that I was not worthy of the intellectual rigor here. And it would not have been far from the truth.

When I came here I had never written a 10-page paper before. I'm not even sure I've written a 5-page paper. I was alarmed and intimidated by the calm eyes of a fellow student who came here from Dalton or Exeter, who thought that compared to high school the workload here was easy. I was completely overwhelmed and thought that reading 1000 pages a week was unimaginable, that writing a 50-page thesis is just something I could never do.

I had no idea how to declare my intentions. I couldn't even articulate them to myself. I've been acting since I was 11. But I thought acting was too frivolous and certainly not meaningful. I came from a family of academics and was very concerned of being taken seriously. In contrast to my inability to declare myself,

on my first day of orientation freshman year, five separate students introduced themselves to me by saying I'm going to be president; remember I told you that. Their names, for the record, were Bernie Sanders, Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz, Barack Obama, Hilary Clinton. In all seriousness, I believed every one of them. Their bearing and self-confidence alone seemed the proof of their prophecy where I couldn't shake my self-doubt. I got in only because I was famous. This was how others saw me and it was how I saw myself. Driven by these insecurities, I decided I was going to find something to do in Harvard that was serious and meaningful, that would change the world and make it a better place.

At the age of 18, I'd already been acting for 7 years, and assumed I find a more serious and profound path in college. So freshman fall I decided to take Neurobiology and Advanced Modern Hebrew Literature because I was serious and intellectual. Needless to say, I should have failed both. I got Bs, for your information, and to this day, every Sunday I burn a small effigy to the pagan Gods of grade inflation. But as I was fighting my way through Aleph Bet Yod Y'shua in Hebrew and the different mechanisms of neuro-response, I saw friends around me writing papers on sailing and pop culture magazines, and professors teaching classes on fairy tales and The Matrix. I realized that seriousness for seriousness's sake was its own kind of trophy, and a dubious one, a pose I sought to counter some half-imagined argument about who I was.

There was a reason that I was an actor. I love what I do. And I saw from my peers and my mentors that it was not only an acceptable reason, it was the best reason.

When I got to my graduation, sitting where you sit today after 4 years of trying to get excited about something else, I admitted to myself that I couldn't wait to go back and make more films. I wanted to tell stories, to imagine the lives of others and help others do the same. I have found or perhaps reclaimed my reason.

You have a prize now or at least you will tomorrow. The prize is Harvard degree in your hand. But what is your reason behind it?

My Harvard degree represents, for me, the curiosity and invention that were encouraged here, the friendships I've sustained, the way Professor Graham told me not to describe the way light hit a flower but rather the shadow the flower cast, the way Professor Scarry talked about theatre is a transformative religious force, how professor Coslin showed how much our visual cortex is activated just by imaging. Now granted these things don't necessarily help me answer the most common question I'm asked: What designer are you wearing? What's your fitness regime? Any makeup tips? But I have never since been embarrassed to myself as what I might previously have thought was a stupid question. My Harvard degree and other awards are emblems of the experiences which led me to them.

The wood paneled lecture halls, the colorful fall leaves, the hot vanilla Toscaninis, reading great novels in overstuffed library chairs, running through dining halls screaming: Ooh! Ah! City steps! City steps! City steps! City steps!

It's easy now to romanticize my time here. But I had some very difficult times here too. Some combination of being 19, dealing with my first heartbreak, taking birth control pills that have since been taken off the market for their depressive side effects, and spending too much time missing daylight

during winter months led me to some pretty dark moments, particularly during sophomore year. There were several occasions where I started crying in meetings with professors, overwhelmed with what I was supposed to pull off when I could barely get myself out of bed in the morning, moments when I took on the motto for school work. “Done. Not good.” If only I could finish my work, even if it took eating a jumbo pack of sour Patch Kids to get me through a single 10-page paper. I felt that I’d accomplished a great feat. I repeat to myself. “Done. Not good.”

A couple of years ago, I went to Tokyo with my husband and I ate at the most remarkable sushi restaurant. I don’t even eat fish. I’m vegan. So that tells you how good it was. Even with just vegetables, this sushi was the stuff you dreamed about. The restaurant has six seats. My husband and I marveled at how anyone can make rice so superior to all other rice. We wondered why they didn’t make a bigger restaurant and be the most popular place in town.

Our local friend explained to us that all the best restaurants in Tokyo are that small and do only one type of dish: sushi or tempura or teriyaki, because they want to do that thing well and beautifully. And it’s not about quantity. It’s about taking pleasure in the perfection and beauty of the particular. I’m still learning now that it’s about good and maybe never done. And the joy and work ethic and virtuosity we bring to the particular can impart a singular type of enjoyment to those we give to and of course, ourselves.

In my professional life, it also took me time to find my own reasons for doing my work. The first film I was in came out in 1994. Again, appallingly, the year most of you were born. I was 13 years old upon the film’s release and I can still quote what the New York Times said about me verbatim. “Ms. Portman poses better than she acts.” The film had universally tepid critic response and went on to bomb commercially. That film was called *The Professional*, or *Leon in Europe*. And today, 20 years and 35 films later, it is still the film people approach me about the most to tell me how much they loved it, how much it moved them, how it’s their favorite movie. I feel lucky that my first experience of releasing a film was initially such a disaster by all standards and measures.

I learned early that my meaning had to be from the experience of making a film and the possibility of connecting with individuals rather than the foremost trophies in my industry: financial and critical success.

And also these initial reactions could be false predictors of your work’s ultimate legacy.

I started choosing only jobs that I’m passionate about and from which I knew I could glean meaningful experiences. This thoroughly confused everyone around me: agents, producers, and audiences alike.

I made *Gotya’s Ghost*, a foreign independent film and study our history visiting the Prado everyday for 4 months as I read about Goya and the Spanish Inquisition. I made *V for Vendetta*, studio action movie for which I learned everything I could about freedom fighters whom otherwise may be called terrorists. From *Menachem Begin* to *Weather Underground*, I made *Your Highness*, a pothead comedy with Danny McBride

and laughed for 3 months straight.

I was able to own my meaning and not have it be determined by box office receipts or prestige.

By the time I got to making *Black Swan*, the experience was entirely my own. I felt immune to the worst things anyone could say or write about me, and to whether an audience felt like going to see my movie or not.

It was instructive for me to see, for ballet dancers once your technique gets to a certain level, the only thing

that separates you from others is your quirks or even flaws. One ballerina was famous for how she turned slightly off balanced.

You can never be the best, technically. Someone will always have a higher jump or a more beautiful line.

The

only thing you can be the best at is developing your own self. Authoring your own experience was very much what *Black Swan* itself was about.

I worked with Darren Aronofsky, the film's director, who changed my last line in the movie to: it was perfect.

My character Nina is only artistically successful when she finds perfection and pleasure for herself not when

she was trying to be perfect in the eyes of others.

So when *Black Swan* was successful financially and I began receiving accolades, I felt honored and grateful to

have connected with people. But the true core of my meaning, I had already established. And I needed it to

be independent of people's reactions to me. People told me that *Black Swan* was an artistic risk, a scary challenge to try to portray a professional ballet

dancer. But it didn't feel like courage or daring that drew me to it. I was so oblivious to my own limits that I

did things I was woefully unprepared to do. And so the very inexperience that in college had made me insecure and made me want to play by other's rules now is making me actually take risks I didn't even realize were risks.

When Darren asked me if I could do ballet, I told him I was basically a ballerina which, by the way, I wholeheartedly believed. When it quickly became clear that preparing for film, that I was 15 years away from being a ballerina, it made me work a million times harder and of course the magic of cinema and body

doubles helped the final effect.

But the point is, if I had known my own limitations, I never would take of the risk. And the risk led to one of

my greatest artistic personal experiences, and that I not only felt completely free, I also met my husband during the filming.

Similarly, I just directed my first film, *A Tale of love in Darkness*. I was quite blind to the challenges ahead of

me. The film is a period film, completely in Hebrew, in which I also act with an eight-year-old child as a costar. All of these are challenges I should have been terrified of as I was completely unprepared for them, but

my complete ignorance to my own limitations looked like confidence and got me into the director's chair. Once here, I have to figure it all out, and my belief that I could handle these things, contrary to all evidence

of my ability to do so, was only half the battle. The other half was very hard work. The experience was

the
deepest and most meaningful one of my career.

Now clearly I'm not urging you to go and perform heart surgery without the knowledge to do so! Making movies admittedly has less drastic consequences than most professions and allows for a lot of effects that make up for mistakes. The thing I'm saying is, make use of the fact that you don't doubt yourself too much

right now.

As we get older, we get more realistic, and that includes about our own abilities or lack thereof, and that realism does us no favors. People always talk about diving into things you're afraid of. That never worked for

me. If I am afraid, I run away. And I would probably urge my child to do the same. Fear protects us in many ways.

What has served me is diving into my own obliviousness, being more confident than I should be, which everyone tends to decry American kids, and those of us who have been grade inflated and ego inflated. Well. It can be a good thing if it makes you try things you never might have tried. Your inexperience is an asset, and will allow you to think in original and unconventional way. Accept your lack of knowledge and use it as your asset.

I know a famous violinist who told me that he can't compose because he knows too many pieces. So when

he starts thinking of a note, an existing piece immediately comes to mind. Just starting out of your biggest strengths is, not knowing how things are supposed to be. You can compose freely because your mind isn't cluttered with too many pieces. And you don't take for granted the way things are. The only way you know

how to do things is your own way.

You here will all go on to achieve great things. There is no doubt about that.

Each time you set out to do something new, your inexperience can either lead you down a path where you will conform to someone else's values or you can forge your own path, even though you don't realize that's

what you're doing. If your reasons are your own, your path, even if it's a strange and clumsy path, will be wholly yours, and you will control the rewards of what you do by making your internal life fulfilling.

At the risk of sounding like a Miss American Contestant, the most fulfilling things I've experienced have truly

been the human interactions: spending time with women in village banks in Mexico with FINCA microfinance organization, meeting young women who were the first and the only in their communities to attend secondary schools in rural Kenya with free the Children group that built sustainable schools in developing countries tracking with gorilla conservationists in Rwanda.

It's cliché, because it's true that helping other ends up helping you more than anyone. Getting out of your own concerns and caring about some else's life for a while, remind you that you are not the central of the universe, and that in the ways we're generous or not, we can change course of someone's life.

Even at work, the small feat of kindness crew members, directors, fellow actors have shown me, have had the most lasting impact.

And of course, first and foremost, the center of my world is the love that I share with my family and friends.

I wish for you that your friends will be with you through it all as my friends from Harvard have been together

since we graduated. My friends from school are still very close.

We've nursed each other through heartaches and danced at each other's weddings. We've held each other at funerals, and rocked each other's new babies. We've worked together on projects, helped each other get jobs, and thrown parties for when we've quit bad ones. And now our children are creating a second generation of friendship as we look at them toddling together. Haggard and disheveled working parents that we are. Grab the good people around you and don't let them go. The biggest asset this school offers you is a group of peers that will both be your family and your school life. I remember always being pissed at the spring here in Cambridge, tricking us into remembering a sunny yard full of laughing Frisbee throwers after 8 months of dark frigid library dwelling. It was like the school had managed to turn on the good weather. As a last memory, we should keep in mind that would make us want to come back. But as I got farther away my years here, I know the power of this school is much deeper than weather control. It changed the very questions that I was asking. To quote one of my favorite thinkers Abraham Joshua Heschel: To be or not to be is not the question; the vital question is how to be and how not to be. Thank you! I can't wait to see how you do all the beautiful things you will do.



Peter Dinklage

Are You Afraid of Change?

Don't be frightened! When a Bennington student, 10 minutes before you come up to the podium hands you a mace, that he made, If you don't bring it to the podium with you, you will never be Bennington. So I would like to thank you Ben for helping me put the fear of God in the audience tonight. But I have to put it down because I'm an actor, and I am really weak. That was heavy! It wasn't like a prop. That shit was real!

Thanks Ben.

So now I'm going to read. And I'm not off book. So I might be looking down a lot. Thank you, President Coleman, Brian Conover, faculty, students, family, alumni, some of whom are dear friends of mine who have travelled all the way from the big city to see me hopefully not humiliate myself tonight.

And especially thanks to you, the Graduating Class of 2012. See, as a joke I wrote, hold for applause, and I was actually going to read that. So you kind of killed my joke!

Let's do that again. 2012, hold for applause.

2012! Wow! I never thought I'd see 2012. I thought perhaps the Mayan calendar would prove correct.

And the end of the world would have been the greatest excuse to get me out of this terrifying task of delivering the commencement speech. But wait! According to the Mayan calendar here, when does the world end? December — December 2012. Damn!

Okay. Maybe I shouldn't talk to the graduates eager to start their new lives about the end of the world. Okay. Really? Really?

Of all the novelists, teachers, playwrights, poets, groundbreaking visual artists and pioneers of science, you got the TV actor. No, no, and I actually heard you petitioned for me. Oh, you fools! You know what, for those of you who didn't petition for me, I would love to later on talk about the problems in the Middle East and the downfall of the world economy. And for those of you who did petition for me, I don't have any signed DVDs of the Game of Thrones. But I am happy to talk about the parallel lineages of

the Targaryens and Lannisters later at the bar.

You see, it took all of my strength, and, of course, a little extra push from my wife Erica for me to agree to

do this. Because I don't do this. In my profession, I am told by people who know what they're doing, where

to stand, how to look, and most importantly, what to say. But you've got me — only me — my words unedited and as you will see quite embarrassing.

Okay, let me think.

I'm thinking. [But actually I didn't read that. That was ad libbed.]

Let me think. What has — everyone and their uncle told me, as I desperately seek out advice on how to give

a commencement address.

“Tell them what they want to hear.”

“Talk about your time at Bennington.”

“Know that there is no wrong speech.” I like that one.

“Just keep it brief.” That was my father-in-law.

“Be brutally honest. Tell them how hard it is after you graduate.” We'll get back to that one.

“Just watch Meryl Streep's commencement speech at Barnard and you'll be fine.”

What did Beckett say: “I Can't Go On, I'll Go On”.

So even if I don't burn in your hearts and minds long after this speech is over. Even if I don't inspire you to

reach for the stars and beyond. Even if I am erased from your memory after one glass of wine tonight —

Where am I going with this? I can't go on. I'll go on.

You know, I won't speak of my time here, like some old fishermen. You have already had your time here.

You have your own story to tell.

But I have to say. For me, it did start here, in Vermont, on a very rainy night. It was 1987. And I was a prospective student. The rain was coming down so hard, it was impossible to see that I was meeting the person who would later become my greatest friend and collaborator. A freshman, who would, 17 years

later, introduce me to the woman that became my wife. I'll call him Sherm. Because I do. It was late at night, on the road, right there near Booth House. And despite the dark night and the heavy rain, this place was so alive. The lights pulsed from each of the dorms.

Now I was a kid from New Jersey who went to an all-boys catholic high school. I was four-foot something. I

mumbled when I spoke. I wore a sort of woman's black velvet cape, black tights, combat boots and a scowl.

But here at Bennington, I was home. And I have to say it doesn't get better. Let me clarify. There are not shinier more important people out there. Your fellow students, your friends sitting around you are as good as

it gets. Twenty two years after my own graduation, I have worked with my rainy night friend and fellow graduate Sherm on countless productions he has written, in all stages of development from living rooms to off-Broadway.

Brooks, Ian, Justin, Brett, John, Matthew, Jim, Sean, Hyla, Nicki and The B are all classmates I shared my time

with here and still work with, and am lucky to call my friends. We are very spoiled here. People always say to

me, "for such a small school it seems like there are so many of you". I find that really interesting. And I kind

of think that's perfect. We can't help it. We burn very brightly. Please don't ever stop.

Graduates, now when I sat where you are right sitting right now, I had so many dreams of where I wanted to

go, who I wanted to be, and what I wanted to do. Theater companies I wanted to start with classmates.

Movies, I wanted to be in. Directors I wanted to work with. Stories I needed to tell. It might take a little time,

I thought. But it would happen. When I sat there, 22 years ago, what I didn't want to think about is where I

would be tomorrow. What I would have to start to do tomorrow.

And I graduated in 1991, a great year. A time of resurgence for independent films in this country. A time of

relatively affordable rents in New York City. See, I assumed that I could make a living writing my plays, acting

way off off off Broadway. And hopefully, you know, one day, join the actors I loved and respected in those

independent films. TV – oh, what, no. What! Are you kidding me? No, didn't even consider that. I had much

more class than that. Much more self-respect than that. And so bothers —

What I didn't have was cash, a bank account, a credit card, or an apartment. I just had debt. A big hungry, growing larger every moment debt.

So as you will tomorrow, I had to leave beautiful Vermont. Attack the life that I knew with socks and a tooth

brush into my backpack. And I slept on ouch, after couch, after couch, after couch at friends' apartments in

New York. Until I wore out the rent paying roommates' welcome.

I didn't want a day job. I was an actor, I was a writer. I was a Bennington graduate. I had to get a day job. I

dusted pianos at a piano store and let those streak for five months. I worked on the property of a Shakespeare scholar for a year pulling weeds and removing bees' nests. I went on unemployment once but

for not for long, I couldn't handle the guilt.

Eventually I was able to pay rent for a spot on the floor of an apartment on the Lower East side. But my

roommate had a breakdown and disappeared. He later resurfaced in a religious cult. I'm making this sound romantic. It really wasn't.

I helped hang paintings at galleries, paintings that inspire you to think, I could do that.

And then finally, after two years of job and couch surfing, I got a job in application processing. As a data enterer at a place called Professional Examination Services. And I stayed for six years. Six years! Longer than

my time at Bennington.

From the age of 23 to 29, well they loved me there. I was funny. I wore black no cap no tights. I smoked in

the loading docks with the guys from the mail room and we shared how hung-over we all were. Everyone called each other shortie. What's up short? How you doing shortie? So how so hung-over shortie?

I called in sick almost every Friday because I was out late the night before. I hated that job. And I clung to that job. Because of that job, I could afford my own place.

So I lived in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Yeah, you say that now. Oh, my kingdom for a time machine.

Yeah,

that's right. I lived in an industrial loft. My rent was \$400 a month.

My dream of running a theater company with my friend and fellow Bennington graduate, Ian bell had died. I

won't go into those details but neither one of us had any business sense and the theater we lived in. It had no heat or hot water. We didn't smell very good. But we had our youth, but youth gets old very quickly.

You'll see.

So Ian moved out to Seattle. And I moved up the street to my loft. And I still didn't have heat.

In 1993, industrial loft meant not legal to live there. See, I don't want this to sound cool and I feel like it's sounding cool. Ad lib.

But I did have hot water — hot water in my bathroom, which a friend of mine using that bathroom once shouted, it smells exactly like. A summer camp in here. It was true. For some reason, in the middle of Brooklyn, there was earth in my shower — actual earth and then oh, look, mushrooms growing from the earth. But I was safe though.

The ideal fire control company was right across the street where they make all the chemicals that put out chemical fires. I did not fear a chemical fire. I would be OK. And all those chemicals in the air were OK too.

Because up the street we had the spice factory, they made spices, and that just covered everything up in a nice cumin scent. I had a rat. But that was OK, because I got a cat. His name was Brian, no relation.

My grandmother had given me a pink pull-out couch. Oddly no friends or recent graduates wanted to crash

on my couch. So I put the couch on its end, so Brian could climb it and look out the window.

I had only the one window. I myself could not look out the window. It was — it was quite high. So I had no

heat. No girlfriend. What! Are you kidding me? No, acting agent. But I had a cat named Brian who told me of the world outside. And I stayed for 10 years. No, don't pity me. There's a happy ending.

When I was 29, I told myself the next acting job I get no matter what it pays, I will from now on, for better or

worse, be a working actor. So I quit my position at the Professional Examination Services. My friends really

weren't happy about that, because it was so easy to find me when I worked there. Work — that was the only

place I had the internet. This was at the beginning of the Internet.

And now I didn't have either the internet or a cell phone or a job. But something good happened. I got a little pink theater job in a play called *Imperfect Love*. Which led to a film called *13 Moons* with the same writer. Which led to other roles. Which led to other roles. And I've worked as an actor ever since. But I didn't know that would happen. At 29, walking away from data processing, I was terrified. Ten years in a place without heat. Six years at a job, I felt stuck in. Maybe I was afraid of change. Are you?

My parents didn't have much money. But they struggled to send me to the best schools. And one of the most important things they did for me — and graduates, maybe you don't want to hear this — is that once I graduated, I was on my own. Financially, it was my turn.

Parents are applauding, graduates are not. But this made me very hungry. Literally. I couldn't be lazy. Now

I'm totally lazy but back then, I couldn't be.

And so at 29, in a very long last, I was in the company of the actors and writers and directors I'd start out that first year, that first day after school. I was. I am by their sides.

Raise the rest of your life to meet you. Don't search for defining moments because they will never come. Well, the birth of your children, OK, of course, forget about it, that's just six months. My life is forever changed, that's most defining moment ever. But I'm talking about in the rest of your life and most importantly in your work. The moments that define you have already happened. And they will already happen again. And it passes so quickly.

So please bring each other along with you. Everyone you need is in this room. These are the shiny more important people.

Sorry, it sucks after graduation. It really does. I mean, I don't know. At least it did for me. But that's the only thing I know.

You just get a bit derailed. But soon something starts to happen. Trust me. A rhythm sets in. Just like it did

after your first few days here. Just try not to wait until like me, you're 29 before you find it. And if you are,

that's fine too. Some of us never find it. But you will, I promise you. You are already here. That's such an enormous step all its own. You'll find your rhythm, or continue the one you have already found. I was walking downtown in Manhattan the other day. And I was approached by a group of very sweet young ladies. Easy. Actually they're sort of running feverishly down the street after me. When they got to me breathless, it was really — they didn't know what to say, or couldn't form the words. But it came out that they were NYU freshmen. And they were majoring in musical theater. Of course, come on. They were like

science majors. They are running after me.

"What musicals are you doing?" I inquired.

"Well," one of them said, looking down at her shoes, "we aren't allowed to be in plays in our freshman year".

Now they were paying a very high tuition to not do what they love doing.

I think I said, "Well, hang in there". What I should have said was, "Don't wait until they tell you you are ready. Get in there". Sing or quickly transfer to Bennington.

When I went to school here, if a freshman wanted to write direct and star in her own musical, the lights would already be hung for her.

Now I tell the story, because the world might say you are not allowed to yet. I waited a long time out in the

world before I gave myself permission to fail. Please, don't even bother asking, don't bother telling the world you are ready. Show it. Do it.

What did Beckett say? "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try Again. Fail again. Fail better."

Bennington Class of 2012, the world is yours. Treat everyone kindly and light up the night.

Thank you so much for having me here.



Rihanna

Start Helping One Person

RIHANNA

So I made it to Harvard. Never thought I'd be able to say that in my life, but it feels good. Thank you, Dr. Counter, thank you to the Harvard Foundation, and thank you, Harvard University for this great honor. Thank you. I'm incredibly humbled by this, to be acknowledged at this magnitude for something that in truth I've never wanted credit for.

When I was five or six years old, I remember watching TV and I would see these commercials and I was watching other children suffer in other parts of the world and you know the commercials were [like], 'you can give 25 cents, save a child's life,' you know? And I would think to myself like, I wonder how many 25 cents I could save up to save all the kids in Africa. And I would say to myself you know, 'when I grow up, when I can get rich, I'mma save kids all over the world.' I just didn't know I would be in the position to do that by the time I was a teenager. At 17 I started my career here in America, and by the age of 18, I started my first charity organization. I went on to team up with other organizations in the following years and met, helped, and even lost some of the most beautiful souls, from six-year-old Jasmina Anema who passed away in 2010 from leukemia, her story inspired thousands to volunteer as donors through DKMS. Fast forward to 2012 and then my grandmother, the late Clara Brathwaite, she lost her battle with cancer, which is the very reason and the driving force behind the Clara Lionel Foundation. We're all human. And we all just want a chance: a chance at life, a chance in education, a chance at a future, really. And at CLF, our mission is to impact as many lives as possible, but it starts with just one. Just one. As I stare out into this beautiful room, I see optimism, I see hope, I see the future. I know that each and every one of you has the opportunity to help someone else. All you need to do is help one person, expecting nothing in return. To me, that is a humanitarian. People make it seem way too hard, man. The truth is, and what I want the little girl watching those commercials to know, is you don't have to be rich to be a humanitarian. You don't have to be rich to help somebody. You don't gotta be famous. You don't even have to be college-educated. I mean, I wish I was, I'm not saying you know... [Crowd laughs] Especially today. [laughs] It's true, I might come back but all right. [Crowd cheers]

But it starts with your neighbor, the person right next to you, the person sitting next to you in class, the kid down the block in your neighborhood, you just do whatever you can to help in any way that you can. And today I want to challenge each of you to make a commitment to help one person: one organization, one situation that touches your heart. My grandmother always used to say if you've got a dollar, there's plenty to share. Thank you ladies and gentlemen. It was my honor.

HAVARD STUDENT

Over her career, she has worked on several projects aimed towards bettering society. Including efforts to increase access to education globally through her Clara Lionel Foundation global scholarship program and her support for the global partnership for education and global citizen. But for this part of the night, I like to highlight some of the work she's done in the field of health and in helping to empower others in that way. Part of Rihanna's humanitarian work has been to develop a cancer diagnosis and treatment

center at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Bridgetown Barbados. As a student of global health, the impact of such an institution is not lost on me. Too often higher levels of medical care are inaccessible to the populations that need them. Allowing individuals to unnecessarily suffer from preventable or treatable conditions. In my experience studying global health issues abroad, in western Kenya for example, one of the greatest barriers to obtaining medical care was distance. Distance to the treatment centers that offered the needed care. During my time there I remember learning the story of a woman who had lost her life during labor. She was being taken care of at a rural health clinic where typical labor procedures could be handled effectively, however, because of her specific complications the type of care she needed was at a larger health center which she couldn't reach in time.

Fortunately, there are efforts locally and globally to tackle issues such as these and I tell this story not to single out a specific region but to highlight them for the importance of this work. In providing such valuable resources for cancer treatment in Barbados, Rihanna has worked to reduce barriers such as these to higher level medical care and the implementation of such work has reverberations throughout society. I find this quotation from Rihanna particularly telling of the humanitarian spirit displayed by such work: "If you have the ability to help and lend a hand, no matter how big or small, you should definitely make that your responsibility". To me, the idea that ability to help others, no matter how big or small, now becomes a responsibility is one that embodies what it means to be a humanitarian. To prioritize helping fellow human beings to the extent that one can is to exemplify humanitarianism. As many of us are students and we'll be navigating life outside of this university in a few years I hope this humanitarian spirit is one that we will incorporate wherever life may take us. Thank you, Rihanna, for us to use our abilities to work, work, work and to exercise these abilities in the service of authors.

Thank you.

KID

Rihanna, we thank you for your compassion. Your philanthropy to help others in need and your wonderful music. On behalf of the children of Cambridge I present you these flowers as a token of our appreciation.



Sarah Abushaar

The Harvard Spring

When I was around seven, my toothless brother and I, on long, boring taxi rides in Syria, would indulge in imperialistic fantasies of how we wanted to take over the country outside our windows.

My parents would quickly crush these imperial conquests by warning: “Shh! You’ll get taken by secret service if they hear you.” The walls everywhere, we were told, could hear our revolutionary ideas and would send us to prison. Whereas children here had ghosts and the boogeyman, our equivalents were our governments. Fast forward to 2010. When I first got here, someone told me, “If Harvard shut its gates, it could be its own country, just like the Vatican.” As I’ve walked through this place every day for the past four years, I was struck by how true this idea was. I saw it everywhere: The Harvard Nation. I saw it in the big and obvious things: We had our own version of the Statue of Liberty, the John Harvard statue, our own embassies, the Harvard Clubs of Boston and London, a tax collection agency, the Harvard Alumni Association, and an endowment larger than more than half the world’s countries’ GDPs.

We also had our own diplomatic passports. Nowhere did I see this more clearly than at US immigration at Boston Logan airport. Whenever they saw I was coming from the Middle East: “What were you doing there? Why are you here? Why did God make you from the Middle East?” But I made sure I dressed like our overly proud Harvard dads, with Harvard hat, Harvard shirt, Harvard shorts, and Harvard underwear and as soon as they saw I was a citizen of Harvard: “Ohhhh! You go to Harvard?! Surely you must not be a national security threat! Welcome to America!” And suddenly all the gates to the American Dream opened wide. I saw it everywhere, this “Harvard Nation”.

But I saw it not just in the hard structures but, more importantly, in its invisible institutions ... the invisible scaffolds around and undergirding the hard institutions.... I saw it in the quarrelling columns of The Crimson newspaper... its Kung-Fu fights of ideas and lively student debates with the potency to propel policy changes by the next morning’s print. I saw it in our cluttered bulletin boards, bustling with life... with announcements of student-led conferences, Broadwayworthy shows and dorm-room projects turned world’s next Facebook smothering each other for our cursory glimpse... a trivial detail these cluttered boards that often slipped notice, but where some saw papers, I saw passions, purpose, creativity - I saw a heartbeat of civic community’s vivacity. My parents’ countries were places where institutional dysfunction killed off this social dynamism and vibrant productivity and so I felt acutely here the value of civil society and living, breathing institutions. My time here would give me a working model of a better world - not only that, but that sense of empowerment to initiate change. You see, with those spying walls still lurking in my memory that constrained the little Napoleons in my brother and me, you might imagine my shock when, in one of my first classes here, I suddenly found myself debating a president.

“So it’s the 1990s,” our negotiations class professor set the stage. “A war’s about to break out between Ecuador and Peru. How will you stop it?” I raised my hand to respond. “Wait.” Professor Shapiro stopped me, “Tell the president what to do” and in walked the Ecuadorian president. In bringing the president to me, in having me speak to and question a shaper of history and experience the value he saw in my view, Harvard would make me feel I too could be him.

I, too, had the power to shape history and not just be passively shaped by it. That sense of infinite possibility we have as children - to think big and conquer great things - was returned to me here, a less despotic version of it. What seemed intractable problems of the world became opportunities for me, for us, to change things. You know, when I first got here my name was Sarah; after Harvard, it would become "Hey Harvard!" with people stuffing 378 years, 5,000 acres of real estate, the entirety of Widener library and 32 heads of state all into my 5 foot 6 inch self! Ridiculous as it is, there's a strange reality to it. Arab-American author Randa Jarrar pictures inhabiting a new place as "[...] running barefoot, the skin of our feet collecting sand and seeds and rocks and grass until we had shoes, shoes made of everything we'd picked up as we ran." And running through Harvard Yard over the past four years, the skin of our feet collecting a world of experiences, we each become this place in a strange way, each of us picking up bits of people and history and ideas that changed the way we saw the world... accumulations I hope we will continue to wear on our "soles" and leave a footprint of all the best we took from Harvard Yard on our new destinations. And that's why I am hopeful for the future. I am hopeful because of my dining hall dinners spent marveling at friends who, while their countries wage bloody war against each other, are able to carry out civil conversation and build generative projects together.

I am hopeful because of the Founding Mothers and Founding Fathers of revolutionary ideas like these being launched into the world who will make of its institutions, its constitutions, its hospitals, its art houses something better. We've heard a lot in the news about an Arab Spring - this graduation is sending 6,000 revolutions into the world in the 6,000 revolutions graduating as part of the class of 2014 ... if we take those waiting revolutions, those great ideas sparked behind Chipotle burritos and Starbucks coffee cups in our version of Tahrir Square, Harvard Square, out with us into the real world, into the real Tahrir Squares, and make something of them! Revolutions not in arms but in minds ... more powerful and permanent and pervasive. For, this isn't a Ukrainian revolution or an Arab Spring, but a global revolution. This is the Harvard Spring of 2014. This is the Harvard Spring!

Snoop Dogg

Love What You do!



Sal Masekela: 22 years you have been in this game, so to speak. 30 million albums. The story is wellknown. But what I want to know, where it began for you. You are still here. You are still beyond the call of

relevant. But tell us a little bit about where you come from.

Snoop Dogg: Well, I come from east side Long Beach, Long Beach, California. I was raised by my mother,

single parent. And she raised me on good music, having a good time. I'm a '70s baby. So in the '70s, it was

all about peace, love, and happiness. So I believe that spirit is the spirit I live by today, you know, being a kid, just being a big grown kid. And I love to have fun. I love to show love. I love music. I love art. I just love being creative. And my mother always kept me in the presence of people like there were times in the '70s where it would be a party in the living room and all the kids would be in the back. And they would call me in the living room to come dance because I could dance real good with the big girls.

Sal Masekela: What was some of that music that your mother was playing?

Snoop Dogg: It was a song called "I ain't going to bump no more with this big fat woman." That was one of

the songs I used to dance to the most. "I ain't going to bump no more with no big fat woman."

Sal Masekela: And growing up in school, I mean, you were not a rapper first. You were into music. You sang in the choir. You were very much a child of the arts even though, quote-unquote, you were in the LBC.

Snoop Dogg: Yeah. It was brought to me at an early age at the church I went to, Golgotha Trinity Baptist Church. My auntie and the people at the church, they would always put together plays where we would have to act and reenact certain heroes of yesteryear to become who we are. And it was through singing, acting, and just being in front of a crowd at an early age that helped me develop the confidence, to when I was able to speak in front of a crowd, I was able to be confident all the times.

Sal Masekela: That's something that you see not just in your music but in the way that you deal with your brand. I mean, I watch you. You can deal with -- and you do -- you deal with just about anyone, which might be hard for some people to comprehend when they think initially of, like, Doggystyle, 1992. How many of you bought that album? Okay. Good, good, good. But you are an everyman. I like to call you Black Switzerland.

Snoop Dogg: It feels like that because, I mean, I can do whatever I want to do whenever I want to do it. It feels good to do it. I feel like you shouldn't be restricted. You shouldn't be put in a box. You should be

who you are at all times. And I've always been a loving, happy, fun, outgoing individual. I'm a fun guy that loves to have a fun time.

Sal Masekela: Over the course of these years, you've made many records. But a lot of -- a lot of your peers who were making records at the same time as you in the early '90s, they're no longer making rap albums. Some of them are still in the business, but they had to sort of shed their hip-hop persona to continue to move forward. Why is it that you think you've been able to maintain your place in pop culture without reeling having to shed the fact that this is the Snoop D-O-double G.

Snoop Dogg: I think it is the way I came. I came being pure and sincere, being honest. That's all I know. I just got to be me. I don't know how to be nobody but me. This is what I'm great at. I am going to continue to do that. I don't know if it rubs you the right way or the wrong way. It makes me feel good, so I am going to do it. If it is good to you, it must be good for you.

Sal Masekela: Within all that, though, you are going to have -- you are going to have challenges and struggle in figuring out which lanes to choose. What might be some of the harder decisions you've had to make in order to stay relevant or to stay on the journey where you are today?

Snoop Dogg: Well, my decisions are never made based on what the popularity of the world will think. It is always based on what feels good to me and what's best for me. I don't ever look at, you know, what I'm doing and say, "What are people going to think?" I do it for the reasons of if it makes me feel good, eventually it is going to make you feel good. That's all it's always been for me. Ever since I came into the music industry, it has always been about the expression of my expression becoming your expression. It is just we become one. I feel like the people feel like Snoop Dogg is a part of their life. It is not like I'm a rapper or producer or actor. I am like one of their family members because they have been with me for so long. I have been so up close and personal. It has never been, like, a secret. I have opened my closet up from day one.

Sal Masekela: I think that's one of the reasons why a little -- a little kid and the grandmother will both be like, "Hey, that's Snoop Dogg."

Snoop Dogg: That's crazy you say that because a lot of times the kids will approach me, and I'm trying to figure out why do the kids like me. This is before I had a football league, before I became, you know, more positive in what I was doing. And the kids would always come up and say, "We love you, we love you." I never understood why they loved me until I had to figure out that I'm that kid. I am who that kid is. He is seeing himself in me. So regardless of how my rhymes may sound, if they are derogatory, if they are explicit, that kid sees something in me that resembles himself. So once I figured that out, I started to aim my pen in a more positive direction to write songs that matter to the kids and do things for the kids like the youth football league.

Sal Masekela: You're from an interesting genre in music in hip-hop in that a lot of times artists are afraid to do what you just described, to make that lane change. There's this perception that you have to maintain the exact same struggle, the exact same front that you had when you first came out in order to stay relative. And you see some of these artists, that they're struggling because they can't let out what it is they have to give. Do you find yourself ever in a position where you are mentoring some of these other young artists? Because every other young artist I see coming out they look at you and they shout you out all the time, "Uncle Snoop, Uncle Snoop." You are on collaboration with a lot of these young artists. What do you say to them?

Snoop Dogg: I'm like a real uncle because I give them guidance on and off the field, meaning in business and in life in general. And a lot of times when I came into this music industry, I didn't have that. I didn't

have big brothers to help me. I had to learn on my own. So what I wanted to do was be something like there had never been before. I wanted to be an uncle or a wisdom of guidance for these young rappers and young entertainers where they could call on me and get some information. And that's what it has been like for the past ten years. I have been mentoring. I have been helping. I have been associating myself with all of the young rappers and trying to be positive and give them an understanding that you do have to reach a certain point in your life and your career where you have to make a better decision for you. And by me having kids and a wife, it also structured my life in a different way to where I pulled back from the things that I used to do to the things I know how to do.

Sal Masekela: There's also something I think -- and I'm sure this wasn't planned. But there is something about your flow, the fact that your flow always came from a place of melody. And even though you were talking about things that were abrasive and sometimes downright guttural, you said them in such a nice way --

Snoop Dogg: Like, "oh, I don't let him out."

Sal Masekela: Exactly. They were less abrasive. But I think -- Where did that come from? Where did you get that sound? Because obviously everyone -- any rapper, it is about that cadence and flow. But yours is unique and timeless.

Snoop Dogg: Well, like I said, I'm a '70s baby. So in the '70s, we only had certain people to look up to and players, you know. I don't know if you understand what a player is, not a football player or basketball player. But a player in the neighbourhood had a certain conversation about his self. He would never speak too loud. And when he spoke, you understood what he said because it was so smooth and so melodic. And I have always wanted to be a player from a kid. So when I was able to become a player, that was one of my traits, one of my accolades, to be able to speak smoothly on a microphone at not be so aggressive and so loud but to get your point across by being smooth and in pocket.

Sal Masekela: I said to someone the other day there are only a few rappers that I look forward to seeing when I'm old. And I know one when they, "Hey, Snoop is playing Vegas," "We should go. We should go. Come on. We should go." And you are going to be able to come out there and be like bow wow wow yippy yo yippy yay and everyone is going to get down.

Snoop Dogg: I just might be in the wheelchair though, but it will be cool because I'm still going to be rolling.

Sal Masekela: Nonetheless, you move forward and we talk about the things that you've done just to be in the conversation. And you got 35 million followers on Facebook. Your YouTube channel just broke the 1 million subscriber mark. If you have never watched "GNN News" which Snoop hosts, it is just pure brilliance. I'm doing a bad job of interviewing compared to what this dude does on his show, and he can talk to anybody. I follow you on Instagram. You cloud my feed in the most wonderful way. But you do this

really interesting job of showing -- you don't just say -- you actually don't even say, "Look at my cars. Look

at this. Look at that." You really take people on a journey of your life to the point where they feel like they're on the journey with you. And they feel like you are not just Snoop Dogg but you really are the homey. What is it that sort of made you embrace social media the way you have?

Snoop Dogg: My team, Cashmere and Stampede. I wasn't a fan of it at all. I remember the first time, they was like, You want Twitter people following you. I was like, "I don't want nobody following me. That would be weird." Because I didn't understand the dialect. You know, I'm like -- and there's people would be like "Hey, Snoop, I'm following you." I'm like, "What you mean you following me?" So once they explained it to me and I understood it, then I put my twist on it and I made it what it is. It is like, I wanted it to be personal. I didn't want it to be my people put up pictures and put up and say, well, Snoop is going

to be here. I wanted it to be more personal where they could see and feel me. And I interact. If there's things on there that I do like, I say, hey, I like it. If there are things on there I don't like, I speak on it. And I

feel like people respect the fact that I'm so up close and personal with them. And I don't have a star wall because when you become successful, it is a star wall that pops up whether security or it is just some sort of wall that prevents the people from getting to you. And I never wanted that wall. I always wanted to be up close and personal with the people who make me who I am.

Sal Masekela: It really resonates. One of the ones you posted the other day was real simple. But it just said find something you love and do it forever. And that's all you said. But it was like, oh, he's not just -- this isn't such a job. It is a reminder like, you love this. And being on that journey with you following you, I

feel like your followers, even when you read the comments, it's cool to see the way people respond to you. And they are inspired by you.

Snoop Dogg: And I'm inspired by them because they make me who I am. There may be some days where I

want to quit. 22 years strong doing this thing, I wanted to be saying: When do I get a vacation? Some people take vacations. I don't know what a vacation is. I have never been on one because I'm so caught up with what I do and what I love. I love doing what I do. It is not even about the money. It is about the passion that I bring because I'm so creative and I love getting it out and I love working with positive people. So at the end of the day, it is more about do it until you can't do it no more. Then when you done doing it, then you can look back and enjoy it because I don't get a chance to look at what Snoop Dogg has done. When I see documentaries of things in my past, I have to stop and watch because I'm so busy playing. I'm in the game right now, so I can't watch my stats and my highlights because I have got another game to play tomorrow.

Sal Masekela: How much has parenthood shaped and framed the mindset of the 21st-century, 2014 Snoop?

Snoop Dogg: Whew, man, my kids are special. They make me better, you know, in all ways, especially on

the music side. Like, my oldest son, I'd never heard of Wiz Khalifa. And he turned me on to Wiz Khalifa, and me and Wiz Khalifa became best of friends and went on tour, made a movie, made a record. And we're brothers now. So it's like, you have to listen to your kids, not you dictate to them all the time.

Because a kid can teach you if you're just willing to listen. My youngest son, he's a football player, but at the same time, me and him, we agree to disagree. And then my daughter, she's a singer-songwriter, so I'm hard on her, telling her, look, baby, you've got to get it all the way together. And don't be mad when I tell you this, because the public is going to be even meaner than I am. It's just getting that understanding with the kids and being able to and being able to have a relationship with them to where they're my friends. They don't look at me as a mean old dad, they look at me as a cool father. And that's what a lot of things going wrong with the parenting nowadays, there's not the communication. It's a gap. Kids and parents need to be friends. It's okay to dictate, but at a certain point in time, they're going to become grown. And if they're your friend, they're going to be able to tell you everything and you're going to be there for them and it's going to be a beautiful relationship. That's what I found out.

Sal Masekela: That's amazing. I made the black Switzerland -- not really a joke earlier, I really do think of you as black Switzerland. It could be a movement. But it's because as a hip-hop artist and a guy who really

put the LBC on the map, you go to China, you go to South Africa, you go to South America, you go to Dubai, you go to India and make Bollywood movies. And anywhere you go in any of these other countries,

you dive 1000% into the culture. You don't just show up and do a show. You go, and you go all in. What is it that motivates you to take it to that level as opposed to just going, doing the show, getting the cash, and getting out?

Snoop Dogg: These people love me. I was taught love. See, when you're taught love, you've got to give it back. And the love that these people give me, some of these people from different countries don't even speak English, but they know every word to my song. So it's my obligation to give them the experience and the ride of their life, to be able to get up close and personal with Snoop Dogg, so when I leave, it's like I never left. We still connected from the hip to the dip.

Sal Masekela: From the hip to the dip. Highlight one of the top international experiences for you. Culturewise.

Snoop Dogg: Performing at Live Aid, and Paul McCartney, Bill Gates, David Beckham, and a host of other people that's billionaires on the side of the stage, rocking to my music. And there was one point I just stopped and looked at them. And it was like, I can't believe you all know Snoop Dogg.

Sal Masekela: Bill Gates.

Snoop Dogg: The Bill Gates. Yeah.

Sal Masekela: Yes. That's a beautiful thing. Snoop, thank you so so much for coming out today, I couldn't think of a better way to end our first day. Snoop Dogg.



Theiry Henry

It Is Not Just a Game

Jessica: Welcome.

Thierry: Thank you.

Jessica: It's a real pleasure to have a footballer of your credentials with us today. And I think I don't think I'm overregulate when I say one of the iconic players of our time. And watching that video laying out your glittering career before you, how do you feel when you see that? I'm just reminded of a quote by a man that you know quite well, Arsene Wenger, who described you as the greatest striker ever, the Michael Jordan of football.

Thierry: Oh, I don't know about that. That's a big one. Did he say I was a pain in the neck also in the court?

First and foremost, hi everyone, sorry. But when I look at this, nothing is impossible. That's what I think of. But nothing is impossible obviously, because you have a group around you that makes it possible for you. That's what I think of. At the beginning of my career, you tend to think about the 'I' in the process because you need to make your way in a group sometime that was already formed. And you need to have an impact, and try to find out who you can be, and what player you can be. And then at the end of the career and throughout the career, you start to understand that without your mates, you are no one. So when I look at this, although the pictures, they were my goals and stuff like that, but it reminds me of the whole process of it. And how you can achieve stuff when everyone kind of trust each other. And there's something that's not, it's almost kind of a thing that people do not do anymore, especially in a group, being honest with each other is very key. Having arguments also is very key. It's healthy as long as it is for the cause of the group, which means winning and getting trophies. So that's what I think of when I see that.

Jessica: It's interesting. I've seen interviews with you before where you've said, "if a player scores a goal for their team, but the team doesn't go on to win, those goals should be discounted?"

Thierry: Yeah.

Jessica: That's incredible. So it's nothing about personal success.

Thierry: Well, it's something that you can share when you're done. I kind of bother my kids with that now with the goals that I used to score and stuff like that. But I think for me one of the most important thing is: Did it matter in the game? Did it matter in the game? Sorry. That's what you're there for. You're there to score goals and win the game. I wasn't interested at the end of the game, if we lost the game and I was going to say at least, I scored two. You scored two, they need to mean something in the game. And if it didn't mean anything. Even when fairness, I did score goals and we won, I wasn't always happy or less satisfied. But yes, it's discounted. I want to be too far, but it's an image that I always said that's... and you scored two you lost four-two. What's the big deal out of that?

Jessica: Incredible.

Thierry: Just might sound harsh, sorry, but to keep you on your toes.

Jessica: You clearly a perfectionist.

Thierry: Well, I think I don't know if everyone is, but I said that you showed something yesterday, that doesn't mean it's going to be the same on the day after. And so I always see it as it's a new race the day after and we all have the same starting point. Let's see who's going to win that race again today. So I don't live in the past, although you need the past to be present in the future. That's what I always say. But the present is actually the moment that we're living right now. So I was trying to live at that particular moment. And the only time you can go back and start to think about what you've done is when it's done. Now I can, that's what I said to you about my kids with it. But at the time that you're active, you need to think about what's coming next.

Jessica: So let's just take it back then, to when you were a young child. As I understand that you used to play in your cousin's bedroom of a tennis ball, kicking the tennis ball around the bedroom when you were just five, six years old. Did you ever envisage at that point, Champions League winner, World Cup winner, European Championship winner, fifth on the all-time Premier League scoring list?

Thierry: No.

Jessica: Did you dream big?

Thierry: You know what I was thinking at that particular moment, that we're going to be in trouble if my mom walks in or my auntie. That's the only thing I was thinking of. And we thought we were clever; we're smashing the ball against walls. And when they walked in we're like... but you think you're that clever when you are young. I didn't think about that. I never put myself in this type of situation. I always said to myself: The rest will take care of itself. Work hard, try to add tools in your game and whatever happens will happen. But you need to be that guy that is going to put something on a table for the coach to work with. Like I said before, that pain in the neck in a good way to challenge your coach because that's what you're supposed to do also, causing trouble in a good way, by the way. But I never thought I was going to do what I did. And I think it's good also, because you need to do something up in the air sometime. You can't always guess what's going to happen. It might have been a dream. I must have said it sometimes with my friend: I'm scoring the last goal of the game. But a lot of people said that and it didn't happen for them. What I wanted to do is to be prepared to be able to perform. And I used to say it: The rest will take care of itself.

Jessica: So you mentioned giving the coach something to work with. Now one of the greatest coaches you've obviously ever worked with Arsene Wenger, who you've described as a father figure.

Thierry: Yes.

Jessica: How much do you think your success, is not down to him, but was nurtured by him and allowed you to realize your potential?

Thierry: The boss, Arsene Wenger.

Jessica: You still call him the boss?

Thierry: Anyone that I had as a boss, I call them boss. It's difficult for me to break that barrier, will be the same way until I die. But that's only me. The boss had an impact on me mentally. So he unlocked some doors that were locked for me and showed me the way and made me understand the player that I could be. But then after, it gave you that freedom to be the player that you could be, but you have to embrace it and grab it. Very important. To an extent, I thought that I did that in a way. But he had that amazing way of talking his way out of the box, and that is well documented. I used to go in his office upset for whatever reason. I don't receive the ball in the right time or why we're not playing like this or like that. I remember going in his office, I'm going to tell him this, I'm going to tell him that. And I used to leave his office. I didn't tell him anything. And he told me what you wanted to tell me and I closed the

door. I'm like, hang on a minute. And I used to leave the room with a smile, not worrying about one hour before and being happy with what's coming next. He had that impact on people where, I think at one point a boss – people always talking about what's happening on the field. But the boss needs to have also the quality to get you mentally and unlock that and trigger your brain. Is very important because you have a lot of coaches that can tell you, I can make you stronger, I can make you bigger, might work on your work tactically. But not a lot of coaches can say, I'm going to make you smarter, I'm going to make sure that you're going to use your brain on the field the right way. And he was one of those coaches.

Jessica: Did he help you off the field as well, did you?

Thierry: Yeah, big time. We used to talk about anything and everything. And just him, his calmness. I mean, I don't know if you guys, a lot of people know him. I'm sure you must have seen him. He has a way to talk to you to calm you down and tell you the right thing. Don't ask yourself the wrong question. That also something about me a lot in the game. I used to try to put the fault on others before when I was a player. And I started to think, how can I move and help those guys and function of how they play. Instead of them adapting to me, to adapt my game to them. That's why he was always saying to me a lot, ask yourself the right question. That guy sees you. In my mind, you could but technically, maybe not in the way that I wanted to. So you have to make a run where that guy probably can see you and the other one makes a difference because he can see you in a different way. And you start to play and function of who you are, who you have around. And that's down to him. Again, he unlocked that door, that eyesight to start to play with that guy. I got to move these guys. I need to drop because he said is never up. Whatever it was in my mind, I started to understand the movement I need to make and function or whatever.

Jessica: You described yourself as a pain in the neck. And I know that when you were playing, you did interviews. You had a question that you didn't like. You would tell the journalists understandable. If someone a colleague on the pitch did something that you didn't like, you would have the confidence to tell them. Did that come from Arsene Wenger as well? Or is that something that's always been within you? Have you always been quite a resolute character?

Thierry: I understood early in my career that we're here for the cause. We're not here to be friends or go out or whatever it was or be nice, we're here to win. That's one of the most important things. And you need to do anything in order. It's like if I see you and you're about to do something – and I was by the way, expecting the same for me. I wanted you to tell me if I wasn't being right on the day, I'm not putting 100% in the game because that would have woken me up and you need that at times and so I was. It was always for the good of the game and for the team. So I was always saying what I had to say. And at times is not always nice because as you can imagine on the field, you can't really be eloquent all the time and use nice words. Sometimes they're not that great and the emotion that goes for your body doesn't come out well in what you want to say and how you say it and how you should say it. But you can put any sugar on it or make it better than what it was. And so yeah, I was very much in people's faces. In my own face also, I expected a lot from myself and a lot from my teammates and they expect the same from me. That is why I did find myself in teams where we more often than not ended up winning something at the end of the season because we were at that altogether within the dressing room.

Jessica: You want a fair few things, don't you?

Thierry: With the team yes. Yes, it's very important. Like I said to you, you need to have guys or other guys around that's going to understand what you're all about, understand your brain, understand that sometime you might lose it, but it's for the good of the team. And the guys that I played with understood that. Like I said to you, I understood them too.

Jessica: Thierry, who are some of the greatest players you played with? Dennis Bergkamp must be one, isn't he?

Thierry: Well, I can name a lot because I did have the opportunity to play with a lot of great players:

Lionel Messi, Ronaldinho, Xavi, Iniesta, Zidane. But I played with some guys that I will not even qualified as human in terms of, we're talking football. And obviously with all due respect, we're talking football because Lionel Messi is not human for me. What he does is not normal, really not normal. I don't know if you guys are realizing what the guy is doing, but this is not normal what he's doing. And Zizou the same, Zidane and the other guys. But when we go back to the normal people, human beings, Dennis Bergkamp is the best player that I played with. Why? Because of, guys, what you didn't see is commitment every day in training and his desire. When it was great, Dennis Bergkamp, we could have taken it easy sometimes in training and nothing was easy with Dennis. You have to make a pass there, he was making a pass there, control left, pass right. He was doing that 100 times. And he was always doing what the game was asking him to do when he can do something else. Play simple, that's one of the most difficult things. And great players do that this simple. When sometime you might show both or whatever. Now all these simple, and Dennis had that in the way he was training. Also, he is the player that I played the longest with. But understand, then you have the freaks up there, but human beings and Dennis Bergkamp, yeah.

Jessica: And now you're on the other side, I guess. You're working alongside the media as a pundit. How much attention did you pay to pundits if they had criticized you or made a comment about you? And do you now get in trouble for criticizing players, perhaps you know and... sense with?

Thierry: When I was player I tend to, when stuff were outside of the game and it was a bit personal, I used to go like talk about the game. You don't have to be, go to the other side. And I think you have to understand that sometime you're not playing well or you did a mistake. When outside of the game and people were talking it on a personal point of view, I used to just set it out with the person usually. I used to have that, like I said, if you don't have something to say, I say it to someone. Now on another side, it's kind of difficult because for example, I look at the shirt there on the screen. Whenever I talk about Arsenal, whenever I just say something, it goes everywhere. It is where it is. They play well. I'm saying they're playing well. I hear he's bias because he is an Arsenal fan. When they don't play well, how dare you saying about Arsenal? What shall I say? It's difficult job to call ultimately what you see in the game and try to call the game out. I try to stay in the game and what happen in the game and not what's happening outside of the game is not an easy one because some of the guys that I played against, some of the guys that I've played, we've still, yeah, a lot actually. So yeah, but you have to call what you see, and it's not that easy. I will be honest, especially when it comes down to Arsenal for me. And even more so, especially because I had to talk about my old boss. Not a lot of people are pundits and they have to talk about their old boss is not an easy one, but I have to do it, I'm doing it. And it is where it is, but I'm enjoying it.

Jessica: I think everyone can join me in thanking Thierry Henry. Thank you for your insight. Thank you for your honesty. Thank you for being with us.

Thierry: Thank you.



Will Ferrell

Trust Your Gut

It is such an honor to deliver this year's commencement address to the University of Southern California's graduating class of 2017.

I would like to say thank you, graduates, for that warm welcome. I would also like to apologize to all the parents who are sitting there, saying, 'Will Ferrell? Why will Ferrell? I hate Will Ferrell. I hate him. I hate his movies. He's gross. Although he's much better-looking in person. Has he lost weight?'

By the way, that discussion is happening out there right now. Today I have also received an honorary doctorate, for which I would like to give my thanks to President Max Nikias. I would also like to recognize my esteemed fellow honorary doctorates, Suzanne Dworak-Peck, a great humanitarian and visionary in the field of social work. Dr. Gary Michelson, whose innovation as one of the country's leading orthopedic spinal surgeons has revolutionized this field. Mark Ridley Thomas, a pillar of local and state government for over 25 years. David Ho whose work in AIDS research led him to be TIME Magazine's Man of the Year for 1996. And one of the great actors of our time, Academy-Award winning actress Dame Helen Mirren. And then there's me. Will Ferrell, whose achievements include running naked through the city of Montrose in Old School. Montrose in the house, alright. Running around in my underwear and racing helmet, thinking that I'm on fire as Ricky Bobby in Talladega Nights. Running around in Elf tights eating gum off the ground and playing cowbell. I think my fellow doctorates would agree based on our achievements we are all on equal footing.

I want the university to know that I do not take this prestigious honor lightly. I've already instructed my wife and my children, from this point on, they have to address me as Dr. Ferrell. There will be no exceptions. Especially at our children's various school functions and when opening Christmas presents. 'Yay, we got the new Xbox, thank you Dad! I mean, Dr. Ferrell.'

I've been informed that I can now perform minimally invasive surgery at any time or any place, even if people don't want it. In fact, I am legally obligated to perform minor surgery at the end of today's ceremonies, or my doctor's degree will be revoked. So if anyone has a sore tooth that needs to be removed or wants hernia surgery, please meet me at the "surgery center" – by "surgery center" I mean a windowless van I have parked over by the Coliseum. The next time I'm flying and they ask if there's a doctor on board, I can now confidently leap to my feet and scream, 'I'm a doctor, what can I do? Yes, no problem, I can absolutely deliver that baby.' Hopefully it will be on United Airlines, in which I will be immediately be subdued and dragged off the aircraft, which we all know will be recorded on someone's iPhone and put on YouTube. You will hear me say, "Call Max Nikias, President of USC. He told me I'm a doctor.' Rest assured, President Nikias, I will use my powers wisely.

Although this is my first commencement address I have delivered to an actual university, this is not my

first commencement speech. The institutions to which I have spoken at previously include Bryman School of Nursing, DeVry Technical School, Debbie Dudeson School of Trucking, University of Phoenix, Hollywood DJ Academy and Trump University. I am still waiting to get paid from Trump University. In fact, it turns out I owe Trump University money for the honor to speak at Trump University.

You are the graduating class of 2017. And by every statistical analysis you are collectively considered the strongest class ever to graduate from this university. All of you have excelled in various courses of study. All of you, except for four students. And you know exactly who you are. If you would care to stand and reveal yourself right now, that would be great, those four students. There's one. Two. Three, four, five, six, eight, more like 20. Very honest of you.

It is incredibly surreal, one might even say unbelievable, that I get to deliver this address to you. As a freshman in the fall of 1986, if you were to come up to me and say that in the year 2017 you, Will Ferrell, will be delivering the commencement address for USC, I would have hugged you with tears in my eyes.

I then would have asked this person from the future, 'Does that mean I graduated?'

'Yes, you did,' says the person from the future.

'What else can you tell me about the future?'

Future person turns to me and says, 'I can tell you that you will become one of the most famous alumni in this university, mentioned in the same breath as John Wayne, Neil Armstrong and Rob Kardashian. You will be referenced in rap songs from Kanye West, to Little Wayne to Drake. Nas will say, 'Get me real bonkers like Will Ferrell on cat tranquilizer.'

'Is that it?' I would ask.

'Yes, that sums it up. Except one other thing – in the future there will be something called Shake Shack. It will start in New York and then come to LA and people will wait hours for a milkshake that is definitely good but not that good that you should wait two hours.'

So yes, if I had heard all of that I would have been incredulous at best. But it turns out I did graduate in 1990 with a degree in Sports Information. Yes. You heard me, Sports Information. A program so difficult, so arduous, that they discontinued the major eight years after I left. Those of us with Sports Information degrees are an elite group. We are like the Navy Seals of USC graduates. There are very few of us and there was a high dropout rate.

So I graduate and I immediately get a job right out of college working for ESPN, right? Wrong. No, I moved right back home. Back home to the mean streets of Irvine, California. Yes. Irvine always gets that response. Pretty great success story, right? Yeah, I moved back home for a solid two years, I might add. And I was lucky, actually. Lucky that I had a very supportive and understanding mother, who is sitting out there in the crowd, who let me move back home. And she recognized that while I had an interest in pursuing sportscasting, my gut was telling me that I really wanted to pursue something else. And that something else was comedy.

For you see, the seeds for this journey were planted right here on this campus. This campus was a theater or testing lab if you will. I was always trying to make my friends laugh whenever I could find a moment. I had a work-study job at the humanities audiovisual department that would allow me to take off from time to time. By allow me, I mean I would just leave and they didn't notice. So I would literally leave my job if I knew friends were attending class close by and crash a lecture while in character. My good buddy Emil, who's also here today – Emil, in the house – Emil told me one day that I should crash his Thematic Options literature class one day. So I cobbled together a janitor's outfit complete with work gloves, safety goggles, a dangling lit cigarette, and a bucket full of cleaning supplies. And then I proceeded to walk into the class, interrupting the lecture, informing the professor that I'd just been sent from Physical Plant to clean up a student's vomit.

True story.

What Emil neglected to tell me was that the professor of his class was Ronald Gottesman, a professor who co-edited the Norton Anthology of American literature. Needless to say a big-time guy. A month after visiting my friend's class as a janitor, I was walking through the campus when someone grabbed me by the shoulder and it was Ron Gottesman. I thought for sure he was going to tell me to never do that again. Instead what he told me was that he loved my barging in on his class and that he thought it was one of the funniest things he'd ever seen and would I please do it again? So on invitation from Professor Gottesman I would barge in on his lecture class from time to time as the guy from Physical Plant coming by to check on things, and the professor would joyfully play along.

One time I got my hands on a power drill and I just stood outside the classroom door operating the drill for a good minute. Unbeknownst to me, Professor Gottesman was wondering aloud to his class, 'I wonder if we're about to get a visit from our Physical Plant guy?' I then walked in as if on cue and the whole class erupted in laughter. After leaving, Professor Gottesman then weaved the surprise visit into his lecture on Walt Whitman and the Leaves of Grass. Moments like these encouraged me to think maybe I was funny to whole groups of people who didn't know me, and this wonderful professor had no idea how his encouragement of me — to come and interrupt his class no less — was enough to give myself permission to be silly and weird.

My senior year I would discover a comedy and improv troupe called the Groundlings located on Melrose Avenue. This was the theater company and school that gave the starts to Laraine Newman, Phil Hartman, John Lovitz, Pee Wee Herman, Conan O'Brien, Lisa Kudrow to name a few. Later it would become my home where I would meet the likes of Chris Kattan, Cheri O'Teri, Ana Gasteyer, Chris Parnell, Maya Rudolph, Wil Forte and Kristin Wiig. I went to one of their shows during the spring semester of my senior year and in fact got pulled up onstage during an audience participation sketch. I was so afraid and awestruck at what the actors were doing that I didn't utter a word. And even in this moment of abject fear and total failure I found it to be thrilling to be on that stage. I then knew I wanted to be a comedic actor. So starting in the fall of 1991, for the next three and a half years I was taking classes and performing in various shows at the Groundlings and around Los Angeles. I was even trying my hand at stand-up comedy.

Not great stand-up, mind you, but enough material to get myself up in front of strangers. I would work the phones to invite all my SC friends to places like Nino's Italian Restaurant in Long Beach, the San Juan Depot in San Juan, Capistrano, and the Cannery in Newport Beach. And those members of my Trojan family would always show up. My stand-up act was based mostly on material derived from watching old episodes of Star Trek. My opening joke was to sing the opening theme to Star Trek. [Sings]

Thank you. Not even funny, just weird. But I didn't care, I was just trying to throw as many darts at the dart board, hoping that one would eventually stick. Now don't get me wrong, I wasn't extremely confident that I would succeed during this time period, and after moving back to LA there were many a night where in my LA apartment, I would sit down to a meal of spaghetti topped with mustard, with only \$20 in my checking account and I would think to myself, 'Oh well I can always be a substitute schoolteacher.' And yes, I was afraid. You're never not afraid. I'm still afraid. I was afraid to write this speech. And now, I'm just realizing how many people are watching me right now, and it's scary. Can you please look away while I deliver the rest of the speech?

But my fear of failure never approached in magnitude my fear of what if. What if I never tried at all? By the spring of 1995 producers from Saturday Night Live had come to see the current show at the Groundlings. After two harrowing auditions and two meetings with executive producer Lorne Michaels, which all took place over the course of six weeks, I got the word I was hired to the cast of Saturday Night Live for the '95-'96 season.

I couldn't believe it. And even though I went on to enjoy seven seasons on the show, it was rocky beginning for me. After my first show, one reviewer referred to me as 'the most annoying newcomer of

the new cast.' Someone showed this to me and I promptly put it up on the wall in my office, reminding myself that to some people I will be annoying. Some people will not think I'm funny, and that that's okay. One woman wrote to me and said she hated my portrayal of George W. Bush. It was mean-spirited, not funny and besides you have a fat face. I wrote her back and I said, I appreciate your letter and she was entitled to her opinion, but that my job as a comedian especially on a show like Saturday Night Live was to hold up a mirror to our political leaders and engage from time to time in satirical reflection. As for my fat face, you are 100% right. I'm trying to work on that. Please don't hesitate to write me again if you feel like I've lost some weight in my face.

The venerable television critic for the Washington Post Tom Shales came up to me during my last season of the show. He told me congratulations on my time at the show and then he apologized for things he had written about me in some of his early reviews of my work. I paused for a second before I spoke, and then I said, 'How dare you, you son of a bitch?' I could tell this startled him, and then I told him I was kidding, and that I'd never read any of his reviews. It was true, I hadn't read his reviews. In fact I didn't read any reviews because once again, I was too busy throwing darts at the dartboard, all the while facing my fears. Even as I left SNL, none of the studios were willing to take a chance on me as a comedy star. It took us three years of shopping Anchorman around before anyone would make it. When I left SNL all I really had was a movie called Old School that wouldn't be released for another year, and a sub-par script that needed a huge rewrite about a man raised by elves at the North Pole.

Even now I still lose out on parts that I want so desperately. My most painful example was losing the role of Queen Elizabeth in the film The Queen. Apparently it came down to two actors, myself and Helen Mirren. The rest is history. Dame Helen Mirren, you stole my Oscar!

Now one may look at me as having great success, which I have in the strictest sense of the word, and don't get me wrong, I love what I do and I feel so fortunate to get to entertain people. But to me, my definition of success is my 16-and-a-half-year marriage to my beautiful and talented wife, Vivica. Success are my three amazing sons, Magnus, 13, Matthias, 10 and Axel age 7. Right there, stand up guys, take a bow, there you go.

Success to me is my involvement in the charity Cancer for College, which gives college scholarships to cancer survivors, started by my great friend and SC alum Craig Pollard, a two-time cancer survivor himself, who thought of the charity while we were fraternity brothers at the Delt house, up on West Adams. Craig was also one of the members of my Trojan family sitting front-and-center at my bad stand-up comedy shows, cheering me on.

No matter how cliché it may sound you will never truly be successful until you learn to give beyond yourself. Empathy and kindness are the true signs of emotional intelligence, and that's what Viv and I try to teach our boys. Hey Matthias, get your hands of Axel right now! Stop it. I can see you. Okay? Dr. Ferrell's watching you.

To those of you graduates sitting out there who have a pretty good idea of what you'd like to do with your life, congratulations. For many of you who maybe don't have it all figured out, it's okay. That's the same chair that I sat in. Enjoy the process of your search without succumbing to the pressure of the result. Trust your gut, keep throwing darts at the dartboard. Don't listen to the critics and you will figure it out.

Class of 2017, I just want you to know you will never be alone on whatever path you may choose. If you do have a moment where you feel a little down just think of the support you have from this great Trojan family and imagine me, literally picture my face, singing this song gently into your ear: If I should stay, I would only be in your way. So I'll go, but I know, I'll think of you every step of the way. And I will always love you, will always love you, will always love you, Class of 2017. And I will always love you. Thank you, fight on!

Munawardin Lakanwal, who is transcriber of the very book, is son of Gul Bahar-U-din Lakanwal. He was born in the dignified and noble tribe of Pashtuns in Khost, Afghanistan. Currently, he lives in Kabul, Afghanistan. Contemporarily, he is sweating in the very domain to serve the beckon of his motherland. Better to say that he has studied English at International English Language Institute and he has been teaching there for 4 years.

Other Publications of Munawardin Lakanwal

- ✚ **Love Never Dies (Novel)**
- ✚ **Special English Development Class**
- ✚ **Wordie Vocabulary**
- ✚ **Comprehensive Paragraph Writing Guidelines**

