



COMMENCEMENT

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Category: [Big Picture](#)

While I've never been asked to give a commencement speech, I'm often asked to speak to a recent grad, the out-of-work friend, or the aimless young adult. My advice is pretty much the same for them all.

- The rest of your life is a gift certificate ready to be cashed in ten-dollar increments. The only catch is that the expiration date is a secret, so spend your certificate consciously.
- Get the order right. Imagine FIRST your ideal life. Where do you want to live? How many hours a day do you want to work? What other interests do you want to pursue? Will you have a family with children? THEN determine what manner of work will support the life you envision.
- You don't need a job, you need a source of income to support your ideal life. Maybe that's a job, but maybe it's a business, or maybe you work as a freelancer. In a world where the only predictable outcome is unpredictability, multiple income streams make a good cushion until you have sufficient cash reserves to recover from surprises. Maybe you thrive on a combination of income sources.
- You're never NOT looking for ways to earn from here on out. Start a database of contacts and keep them posted about your accomplishments using digital tools. Whether it's as big as your industry's Oscar, or as small as a rave review from your boss or client, let others know that your work is creating impact, and you'll never have a problem finding more. Income will find you.
- It's what you don't know you don't know that creates the most painful surprises. So don't act like you know everything, because you don't, and you never will. This should be a big relief! The wise people you want to work with know this. Humility takes the pressure out of every situation. Be confident about what you do know, but never hesitate to ask for help with what you don't.
- Stay curious. Curiosity keeps your brain cells tripping, it makes you more interesting, and it makes you more alive. Never stop learning. Curiosity is more honest and valuable than knowing it all.
- Learn about an essential tool for getting what you want from your life: money. Talk to people you respect about how they make financial decisions. Notice the emotional return for the money you spend, as well as the financial return for money you invest. Use the words, "need" and "want" accurately. Read about the power of compounding interest now, and you'll thank yourself later.
- In every action, and every word, you show the world who you are. Decide what principles will guide how you pursue your life's ambitions. Then hone them as you become more aware of your guiding forces.

“Your beliefs become your thoughts,
Your thoughts become your words,
Your words become your actions,
Your actions become your habits,
Your habits become your values,
Your values become your destiny.”

— Mahatma Gandhi

I wish you a destiny with all you desire.

Comments



Cathy H - 2019-04-19 18:18:45

Beautifully stated and a wonderful reminder as I navigate my next chapter!



Brenda Clevenger - 2019-04-19 09:46:07

I love this succinct summary of how to look at life future forward and then milk it for all its worth so you can live the life you want. This should be required reading for all high school and college graduates (divorcees and newly laid off employees). Well said my friend!



Janet Murff Como - 2012-05-31 16:46:50

Very insightful, Dodi. I will remember your words when speaking with the troubled kids I work with. Thank you!



Dodie Jacobi - 2012-05-31 11:27:49

Thanks Marna - an extra welcome compliment coming from you!



mbcourson - 2012-05-31 07:13:11

Good post, Dodie. And a wonderful quote from the Mahatma. Nicely done.