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My Recent Experience with the Power of Daily Intentions

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I just had a wonderful experience! One, that I want to share with you.

This year, I was asked to to be the commencement speaker at Mesa Community College, my old alma mater. It is one thing to “give an inspirational speech” but I found it a very challenging experience to write an inspirational speech for a targeted audience of millennials! Ultimately, I decided that authenticity was the best approach, and I searched my heart for what I could share.

I am pleased to say that I felt the connection that night. I felt appreciated for what I shared. And, I feel good about what I was able to offer those that were ready to embark on their next journey.

Below is my “inspirational speech,” limited by the time provided, but from my heart. I want to share it with you also. One or two of the “lessons” might just be an inspiring reminder for you to live the life *you deserve*. If you have any questions or if there is anything I can do to support your efforts to be your best self – **I hope you will contact me.**

Always my best,



Mesa Community College Commencement Speech, May 15, 2015

Congratulations Ladies and Gentlemen. You are embarking on a path in a world embedded in contradiction. A world that is both uncertain and scary, yet endlessly hopeful. And I believe that this world is

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hopeful because YOU exist in it.

Forty-four years ago, I was sitting where you were sitting. I was a member of the 1971 graduating class. A lot has happened in those 44 years.

44 years ago, as I walked across the stage to receive my diploma, our country was emerging from a recession, we were at war with Vietnam, and the air was volatile with anti-war protests across the nation. A lot has changed, but at the same time, a lot is much the same.

I'm not able to recall much about the evening – 44 years ago. But, I do remember how I felt. I remember feeling proud and grateful for what I had learned, the friends I had made, and the teachers and mentors that had sponsored me, believed in me and inspired me.

I remember feeling excited about the future. And, intuitively, I knew that this was a new, elevated platform for me to launch the next chapter of my life.

Over the past 44 years, I have had a wonderful and blessed life. I have my health, a beautiful family, a successful career, and have experienced inspiring personal and spiritual growth.

Be assured that my life has not been perfect. My life has included disappointments, losses, heartaches, failures, mistakes, and a few really bad choices. But through all of that, I never allowed those negative events to burden me with “baggage” or make me a victim.

In fact, all of those experiences have been material in making me the successful, grateful, and passionate person that I am today.

Your life will be full of lessons. And, those lessons will enable you to grow, to learn, to strive for excellence, and to better understand who you are.

At this point in my life, I am focused on creating a legacy – My mission is to unleash the power in others by helping them to understand and embrace who they are, and what they want to accomplish in their lives. I am truly passionate about helping others discover their power and potential.

So tonight, please allow me to share with you some of the lessons that I have learned since my commencement from college.

My purpose and intention in sharing these “Lessons Learned” – is not to air my “dirty laundry” but to share with you and, hopefully, minimize your need to learn these lessons the “hard way” – like I did.

Lesson #1 – KNOW WHO YOU ARE.

I spent too much of my life trying to be the person that I thought others wanted me to be. My parents, my spouse, my bosses. I was so busy trying to please them that I eventually lost myself.

Unfortunately, it wasn't until I had lost (not only myself) – but many other important parts of my life that I was actually able to discover myself.

Self discovery and self-actualization is a life-long journey. A journey that you can start right now, by understanding and knowing **who you are, what your core values and what your inherent gifts are.**

You will most likely need to “dig deep” to truly find your

purpose, your “why.”

I hope that you have had the opportunity to view Simon Sinek’s 18 minute Ted Talk on “START WITH WHY.” Sinek’s work validates that inspirational leaders identify a purpose and follow it.

The actions these leaders take and what they make is secondary to achieving the mission.

As the leader and driver of our own life we can realize the life we dream of and deserve, by following our passion and living our lives intentionally and on purpose pursuant to our own vision.

If you happen to remember only one thing I say tonight, please remember this;

*I believe, with all my heart, that the most important thing in living an abundant and blessed life is to **be true to yourself.***

But, in order to do that – you **MUST**, first, know who you are.

As you commence this next chapter in your life, you will encounter people who will pretend to have it all figured out; bosses, friends, family and strangers.

Let me tell you, no one has it **all** figured out, and those who pretend to are doing so, because it is easier to pretend than it is to face life’s ambiguity.

Understand the facts. But, trust your heart, trust your gut, and be true to yourself.

It’s okay to feel uncertain, and it’s certainly okay for you

to take the time to figure it out.

But, when you know who you are, when you can be true to yourself by living a life that honors your intentions, your core values and your inherent gifts ... you will find yourself empowered to make the choices that engage your heart, as well as your mind.

You will make those choices because it engages all of you.

Lesson #2 – TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF AND YOUR HEALTH.

Please make your health and fitness a priority in your life. Today you may feel immortal. (I certainly did, when I was your age.) But, as the years add up – your body will let you know the toil your lifestyle has imposed upon it.

Trust me.

Take care of your health and your body. Your body is the vehicle that will take you on this life journey.

Lesson #3 – CREATE BALANCE IN YOUR LIFE.

Nothing in the world is more important than family and friends.

Still, practice the art of putting yourself first.

Work-life balance means knowing that you are entitled to read for pleasure, go for a run, or do any of activities that enable you to feel like a whole person.

Anyone who requires you to live, eat, breathe and sleep his or her ambitions or goals is not someone who understands life.

Do not become enslaved into someone else's ambitions or life.

When you are working constantly, Monday through Friday – and even weekends – chances are, you are not living your own life.

I can promise you that there is not ANY job that is worth your physical health or your sanity.

Lesson #4 – BE FINANCIALLY SAVVY.

1. Stay out of debt, I repeat: STAY. OUT. OF. DEBT.

As a career banker, I can tell you the damage that debt does to individuals and to families. You have the rest of your life to buy a house, a new car and that unnecessary state-of-the-art gym membership.

You owe it to yourself to stay out of debt to the greatest extent you possibly can, at least for now. And remember, a car is a utility; not a lifestyle.

2. Save and invest your hard-earned money.

Save some part of your money!

Many of you are officially entering the all important “*compounding years.*” If you don't know what compounding is – look it up, and understand why it's important. While you're at it – look up the term “*investing.*” Understand why and how it differs from “*saving,*” and learn why they are both important.

To that end, both invest and save your money; your retired, 65- year old self has every right to a good life too.

Lesson #5 – LIVE A LIFE OF GRATITUDE.

Think about how you feel when you know that you are appreciated and valued.

Make a point to help others to feel that way.
Say “thank you.” It will set you apart.

“Showing gratitude is one of the simplest yet most powerful things humans can do for each other.”

Lesson #6 – BE FEARLESS.

Feel your Fearlessness – that internal confidence and wisdom that is in your heart. Use that feeling of fearlessness to obliterate any fears.

Use your fearlessness to THINK.
Use your fearlessness to challenge the process.
Use your fearlessness to ask the kinds of questions you need to ask in order to understand.
Use your fearlessness to help others, or to do favors.

AND, PLEASE – do not let any fear overwhelm your dreams!! Let the obstacles you face (and there will be obstacles) be external, not internal.

Lesson #7 -STAND IN YOUR POWER.

The Power is Within YOU....

Find your place, use your potential, and **Stand in your Power.** – your place of wisdom and peace and strength.....

“When you know your power ... you have in your hands the key to your own happiness and success.”

CLAIM YOUR Power, and from that place:

- Move forward with intention,
- Move forward with courage,
- Move forward with your values and your gifts,
- Move forward with gratitude, and
- Move forward with kindness

When you do, you will have made an impact, created value, and made this world a better place

So those are my life lessons – learned the hard way – and this is my challenge to each of you, and beginning right now;

1. Know who you are
2. Take Care of yourself
3. Create Balance in your Life
4. Be Financially Savvy
5. Live a Life of Gratitude
6. Be Fearless
7. Stand in your Power

I am truly honored to be here tonight – to celebrate you as you commence the next chapter in your life. Congratulations.

I am truly excited for you and I want to thank you – for who you are. I want to thank you for your gifts, your dreams, and the difference you will make.

Thank you

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