



*Student's speech, on behalf of all the graduands,  
delivered at the UNE Graduation Ceremony in Hong Kong, November 2008  
by Ms Wong Pui Shan Sky, Master of Counselling graduand*

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Vice Chancellor Alan Pettigrew, University of New England Pro Vice Chancellor and Deans, Hong Kong Shue Yan University, City University of Hong Kong and The Chinese University of Hong Kong representatives, our professors, parents, friends and fellow graduates, I am very proud and honored to speak to you on this very important day. Today is a great day. Today we graduate. I think that graduation day is a big day; this is our great happiness, as well as our friends, our relatives, our teachers.

On behalf of all the graduands here I would like to thank The University of New England for the opportunity it has presented us to further our studies and to attain our degrees. For us as Master of Counselling students it has been an amazing journey. I'm sure I can say the same for all the graduands here from the different disciplines. I'd like to thank the University of New England and the Hong Kong academic staff, the administration and the faculty of both universities on their hard work and dedication on our behalf. Each professor brought to us different skills and knowledge and helped us to grow.

To my Master of Counselling fellow students, remember our first lectures in September 2006 when we came as strangers who did not know each other, we had difficulties sharing with different ages and cultures in the lectures, and we tried hard to work together with our lecturer. Remember our coffee breaks, our lunch period, when we gathered together. Remember the surprise we all felt when we understood that we passed

our first assignments and our final placement profiles. Remember those teachers who made you feel a tiny spark of interest glowing inside you and helped us to discover who we are and what we'd like to do in our professional field. Remember everything we shared, we cried, we smiled, we struggled in our life. All these 'Remembered Stories' stored in your memory. And I'm sure all the other disciplines here had similar experiences of learning, feeling stressed, wanting to give up but keeping on going and now achieving. At this moment, I want you to look around you and remember this moment. Look at your group-mates, your teachers and your parents. I know you will agree with me that they have given their unconditional support and love.

Teachers and professors, you were our caregivers. We were all rough diamonds. Through your special care and polishing, we have all become sparkling diamonds shining here today. During these two years, we have passed through a hard time for both working and studying, but you were always patient and loving, and made learning easy and fun. I would like to thank all the lecturers who taught us across the many disciplines. We will never forget all the things we learned from you. Thank you very much.

The friendships we students have all made will last forever with us. UNE has given us a sense of collegiality. More importantly, UNE has made it possible for us to now contribute to our community and society in many different ways. We have not only learned new knowledge, but also practical skills, communication and a strong sense of responsibility for contributing to the community.

Parents are our great shelter. I would like to honor all of our parents in the audience who encouraged us and supported us and without whom this would not have been possible. Today I represent all of us to say thank you to all of our fathers and our mothers. Your soup and your food made us healthy. Your nurture and your concern made us grow. Your support and understanding made us develop. Your discipline and love made us successful and gives us a great achievement today. This is also your great achievement today.

With the knowledge and friendship we gained from our UNE experience, I wish you all success on your life path. I hope you can all find the meaning of your life, your dream, your passion and have strong persistence and faith during the process. Make a decision that you are going to make a difference in the world, work hard but do get your priorities right.

Always have time for your families and friends. Take time to enjoy the beauties of nature and to care for them because without water and air you cannot survive.

Carl Jung (1993:358), one of my favorite psychologists, said, “Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.” So, today I remind you all to look into your hearts and be awake before you agree to a dream that is not your own. Open your hearts to your fellow passengers and they will surely open theirs to you. At this moment, I would like you to thank yourself. I hope we all can be congruent, increase our self awareness, create our “Wisdom of Box”. Trust yourself and trust your higher being “we can do it”; I wish everyone’s dream will come true and that you have success in all that you do.

We are leaving here to start a new life. We will never forget the happy times, the hard times and the journey together; our memories will keep us together. May I say again ‘Thank you’ to all at the University of New England and the other universities who partnered with UNE, for their support and encouragement in our studies. I am really proud of being—one of us—UNE graduates.

One of our famous Chinese philosophers, Chuang Tzu said:

“Do not seek fame. Do not make plans. Do not be absorbed by activities. Do not think that you know. Be aware of all that is and dwell in the infinite. Wander where there is no path. Be all that heaven gave you, but act as though you have received nothing. Be empty, that is all.”