

Firstly, this has to be my most daunting speech (don't worry speech implies long and this isn't) ... and its unnerving because this amazing honour bestowed on me behooves a message that is worthy of standing here before you & I am not sure if I am up to the task! It is made all the more daunting as my family, friends and ex-colleagues are also here.

I don't have a fabulous one liner like Michelle Obama – you probably know her famous line when she said ..... *I wake up every morning in a house built by slaves* – yes, I have been Googling graduation speeches! But I have seen this university build and flourish through the hard work and dedication of many. I stand before you as an alumnus of an antecedent institution who gave me a passport to the future many moons ago when I graduated. Although I never attended a ceremony such as this as back in the day it wasn't considered 'cool' to turn up to these ceremonies.

So, receiving this truly humbling award completes the circle – by a very circuitous route. But today is not about me - I am the side show – today is about you seated before me and, as others have said, it is a day of celebration.

By now most of you will have well and truly left the university behind and entered the world of paid work – maybe not in the job of your dreams or maybe still in casual, less than ideal employment but enough to get by and be able to fork out for smashed avocado brekkies and expresso martinis.

After today you will officially have a passport to the future through the education you have received – a passport that many in this country will not have the opportunity to work for and get. The figures from the ABS (May 2016) indicate that only 17% of people aged between 15 & 74 have completed a Bachelor Degree – so you are in a very privileged position.

So just as travel warnings are issued when you travel with your other passport, take a moment to think about how you will use the privilege that a university degree gives you. You have gained a qualification which will make a difference – you are fortunate – not everyone will get the chance - you are blessed – what will you make of it? What imprint will you leave?

In Australia, most of us have grown up in a world of heightened expectation – we have been told, often repeatedly, that we can have it all and have it now – our economic systems and our public policy are designed to feed into this narrative, with strong encouragement for individual aspirational dreams and more than ever, Australians are now struggling to cope with their elevated expectations and unrealized dreams, particularly so for the young.

So, in the future ... you may not

- make a fortune,
- change the world,
- find a cure for cancer,
- be the first CEO at your work by 25
- start a new business or industry,
- discover a previously unknown solar system,
- own a Porsche .....yes you are capable of all these things and more, but in reality, you are more likely to ...
  - stay at home with your parents and siblings, longer than you would like,
  - think you pay too much tax and grumble about it,

- struggle to get the cash to travel and discover cultures and people previously unknown,
- take time and possibly endure some pain until you discover a life partner who will put up with you - and regrettably she or he is unlikely to be a mirror image from their Facebook or Tinder profile or the set of The Bachelor or Beauty and the Geek series .....

so, my challenge to you this morning is to live an ordinary life extraordinarily well – because after all we can't all be extraordinary! Of course, excepting the company here on stage.

I'd like to think that over the next few years you will be associated with something other than your wants and needs. The Facebook page would depict you ... as part of us, the me ...as part of the we, not I, and endless selfies!

Indeed, what will your Snapchat, Twitter, Facebook caption depict as you take the opportunity for a photo after your walk across the stage?

So, my tips for an ordinary life lived extraordinarily well – and I might add ...all sorts of pop culture and social media will give you a version of these but here we go and lest this sound like a pious sermon I can assure you I too struggle daily to adhere to my own list.

- Allow your compassion for others to override your desire for self and recognition. Like all of us it will not be possible to conquer our quest for self-gratification - there's no such thing as perfection – but just take the time to walk in someone else's shoes – metaphorically of course -- you can still covet the newly released RM Williams gold boots or Jimmy Choo heels. If by chance you have these for today's ceremony go carefully across the stage – take your time.
- Engage with people you normally wouldn't mix with– you might just learn something & have gained something without racking up a credit card debt and in return you have given something of yourself. For example, you are seated today alphabetically – probably next to someone you may never have spoken to – what did you learn... what will you leave, what impression will you make? What is your emotional wake?
- Recognise you don't know much – life's learning has just started – listen hard, speak last .....things aren't black and white – in between there are a whole range of greys, from very pale to very dark.
- Remember it's OK to speak up – don't swallow your voice or hide your light under a bushel but remember humility is a worthy trait often lost in fulfilling our individual expectation quest.
- Remember you can't always have what you want. Just get on – just do it – just act. If you have missed the bus to your dreams & aspirations then catch the next bus as it may take you somewhere unexpected where you can make your mark. Something valuable may be grasped more precious than money and possessions.
- Work hard – and that includes working smarter.

- Spend time alone occasionally - get in your PJ's, turn off the external noise (yes that does mean no electronic devices within reach) and listen to your inner voice – the internal dialogue that is your character's satellite navigation system.
- '*There are people who take the heart out of you and there are people who put it back*' so ... surround yourself with people who make you feel good, for who you are, not what you are or pretend to be. You don't have to have a bursting friends Facebook account – you just need the ones who like the real you but make sure at least one of them has a good sense of humour as laughter is the elixir of life. In case LOL is more your language – Laugh out Loud – lots.
- And last but not least – be ok with yourself, understand your values and your value – don't compromise yourself as it's all you've got.

And so, I say to all seated here and all those back at their desks – thank you for this great and quite simply tremendous honour – I am enormously proud, as I sincerely hope those of you seated before me, are as proud as you receive your awards.

Go now with energy and enthusiasm – be proud of what you have achieved and use that achievement to be extraordinarily ordinary.