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**Ned Hickson**

# My commencement speech (should I ever give one)

To the Class of 2017, faculty members, parents, dignitaries, mis-informed wedding crashers, and Visa or MasterCard representatives who have gathered here today:

I am honored to have the opportunity to address this group of graduating seniors and impart the wisdom I have gained since my own graduation from high school nearly 150 years ago.

Standing before you today, I see the anticipation on your faces as each of you comes to realize what sharing my wisdom with you means: Possibly the shortest commencement speech in school history.

Before long, you will step forward and receive the culmination of 12 — possibly 14 — years of education. You will shake hands with some of those who have helped

guide you to this milestone. And unless your last name begins with a “Z,” you will return to your seat as the rest of your classmates step forward to receive their diplomas.

That’s when you will silently think to yourself, “I really shouldn’t have had that second bottle of Mountain Dew.”

But you will sit quietly, probably cross-legged, and deal with it. You are now officially your own person — making your own decisions, embracing the rewards and accepting the consequences of those decisions — as you embark on a journey of independence in a world of your own making.

At least until laundry day, when you will return home to eat chocolate chip cookies while mom gets the Cheeto and pizza stains out of your favorite underwear.

That’s because having wisdom isn’t about knowing everything. It’s also about recognizing and acknowledging when you don’t.

Just like getting those stains out, it’s OK to admit when you don’t know how to do something or handle a tough situation in life.

A smart person takes ownership of the things they know; I wise person seeks the knowledge of others when they don’t.

When I graduated from high school in 1984, there was no Internet.

No Siri.

No Pinterest.

And thankfully, no Kanye West.

Therefore, the Class of 1984 was expected to know EVERYTHING. The pressure was tremendous! We hugged our parents goodbye and entered a dark, Google-less world. We were young pilots flying blind. Dead stick. Rudderless. Broken-winged.

And lots of other euphemisms I am now able to Google for occasions like this.

We had no choice but to rely on each other. We pooled our knowledge.

Challenged each other.

Together, we advanced ourselves and society by having the courage to answer fundamental questions like:

*What would happen if we grew chia seeds on a clay pot shaped like ‘Mr. T?’*

Truth be told, it’s human nature to want to know all the answers. At the same time, culture discourages us from admitting when we don’t have them. You’ve now spent the better part of your first 17 to 20 years of life receiving an education — not so you’ll have all the answers, but have the courage and wisdom to ask the kinds of questions that will improve your life and, hopefully, the lives of others.

This will take more than Googling.

More than Wikipedia.

Possibly even more than “how-to” videos on YouTube.

It’s certainly going to take a great data and texting plan.

However, most of all it’s going to take the kind of determination that got you

here; sitting in these chairs; moments away from receiving your diploma; and still regretting that second bottle of Mountain Dew.

Yet, I look upon your faces and see my own hope reflected in them. When you leave here, be courageous and wise.

Never be afraid to admit you don’t have all the answers. Those who do are destined to a life of empty promises. Usually somewhere in our nation’s Capitol.

Always remember the feeling you have right now. The anticipation. The hope. The unlimited possibilities.

It’s who you are at this moment.

It’s who you will always be.

As long as you allow yourself to be wise...

*Ned is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. Write to him at needhickson@icloud.com*

## Acupuncture workshop for ‘Aging Well’ at LCC

Join local acupuncturist, Patricia Immel, MAOM, LAc., to learn what this fascinating, effective and safe medicine can do for you.

She will be presenting at Lane Community College in Florence on June 13, from 11 a.m. to noon, as part of PeaceHealth Peace Harbor Medical Center’s Aging Well series.

“You have an innate capacity to heal. Stress, injury, trauma, and illness can strain that capacity. Acupuncture works to

strengthen you by stimulating vitality and circulation, calming and balancing your nervous system, and supporting healthy immune function,” said Immel.

Acupuncture is gaining popularity as many people are now using this traditional practice to help them recover from injury, illness, stress-related conditions and improve their quality of health and life.

Many elite medical centers such as the Mayo Clinic, Duke University Medical Center, and the University of California-

San Francisco now offer acupuncture.

In 2015, the renowned Mt. Sinai Beth Israel in New York staffed 28 acupuncturists who performed more than 10,000 inpatient treatments.

Additionally, the World Health Organization is an international proponent of acupuncture for a wide range of health concerns and diseases including chronic pain, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The United States armed

forces utilize acupuncture to help military personnel and their families recover from war-related conditions.

Medics are trained to administer simple treatments in the field to help ease pain, anxiety, insomnia, depression and PTSD.

The Veteran’s Administration recognizes acupuncture as an effective treatment and a way to decrease the need for medications for many veterans.

At Wellspring Clinic, Immel

offers a variety of acupuncture treatment options including private, personalized treatment sessions and Points of Grace community acupuncture.

Together with Dr. Mark Immel, naturopathic physician, they are dedicated to inspiring and supporting people in their quest for a healthier, happier life utilizing natural medicine, wisdom and compassion.

Wellspring Clinic is located at 1845 Highway 126, Suite H in Florence and can also be contacted at 541-902-8860.

# It’s Garage Sale Time!!!!

Friday, June 9th, 4-7pm  
Saturday - Monday, June 10-12 10am-6pm

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