

first of all: congratulations to all graduates!

<applaus>

did one of you ever heard of neil armstrong?

i will help you: he was the first man on the moon.

it was 1969 and by walking on the moon he said:

this is a small step for man, but a great leap for mankind

for this graduation i will turn it around: graduating from bethel methodist school might not be a great leap for mankind but for you, it is!

you made a big milestone now, of which another few milestones will follow in future.

talking about 'future', i am pretty sure that lots of people, speaking from a position as i have now, told you: "follow your heart", "chase your dreams" and "if you think you can, you can".

although all these expressions have a great motivational power, i want to add an additional message.

first a question.

if you, after some years, have not reached your goal, as it is set now in your heart, are you then a loser?

my answer is clear: no! not at all!

let me give an example: myself!

when i finished my secondary school (i was 17 by then), i thought "i want to see the world, let me join the navy". well, that is what i did.

but when i tell you that i am able to make websites and not too bad in ict-things, why didn't i thought by then: let us go for being an ict-engineer.

well, i'll tell you!

computers didn't exist. no internet at all. no tablets or smartphones. all these gadgets are now rather common and it looks like they were always there, but that is not true. that is something of the last ten or twenty, may be thirty years.

when i saw a computer for the first time in my neighbourhood, i was approx 30 years old.

nobody of my generation ever thought "in future i want to do something with computers", that was simply impossible.

what can we learn from that observation?

well, the image of the future is always changing. accept that and adapt to it. you will have a better life!

in other words: have your dreams but do not be dissapointed when these dreams will not come true.

your environment is changing all the time and so is your idea of the future doing: it changes all the time.

make yourself strong and accept this as a fact.

did i ever thought "i want to be teacher"? to be honest: no!

but i am! am i a loser because i have a profession i never dreamed of?

of course not: i am a math teacher at gvp now and i embrace the idea every day!

this is my idea at this moment for my near future.

not too far away because, also my future is changing.

in short, let this be my message for you.

enjoy TODAY and have nice dreams about TOMORROW.

accept that the day AFTER TOMORROW there is may be a new future that you can not see as yet.

when you enjoy what you are doing by now, you cannot be a loser. NEVER.

another related experience is this: in 2011 and in 2013 i was a pilgrim on my way to santiago de compostela.

i walked along the spanish northcoast for approx 35 days in which i made approx 900 kilometers

and then, finally, i reached my goal: the huge cathedral of santiago de compostela.

however, reaching the goal is just one moment in the whole journey.

my challenge was to enjoy every moment, every step, every day again again.

in this view you should enjoy all moments at all stages of your life, every day again.

the idea that you only can be happy when the goal has been reached is so much more poor than the enriching idea of joy that you can have by your every day experiences

it is not only the view from the crater-rim of the quill that makes you happy, it is the tour to the crater-rim, as well! so enjoy every step!

so, my message for all of you:

1. enjoy every day of your life, every step you make, to whatever goal it may reach and...
2. start with dreaming of the near future today and make a new dream tomorrow.

i wish you all a happy today and a happy tomorrow!