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I am not sure if it is really the done thing, but I wanted to grab this opportunity, having just received my Doctor of Science, to confess something. Even though I got the prize, I am not really 'the guy'. I am more like a very interested onlooker – I am truly fascinated by humans and I have met some truly fascinating humans. I really want to understand people and to do so, one must observe them carefully and then try to work them out. Charles Darwin once said 'be sure to observe, and make note of those things you don't expect'.

Take for example the woman with a painful withered arm that feels swollen when it is not, is colder than the other one but warms up if it is held on the other side of her body; or motorcyclist who had been flung from his bike, hands gripping the brakes, and who ripped from his spinal cord the nerves that served his arm, and who forever feels a clenched phantom fist on an outstretched phantom arm but sees a lifeless limb hanging from his shoulder – as though his brain is forever trying to solve a problem to which there is no solution; or the asylum seeker previously held captive in a small box for 2 years, who, as he recounted his captors' practice of placing a snake in the bottom of the box so he would hold himself up by chains around his forearms, I watched as his forearms bruised and became swollen; like the patients who would come back to see me singing my praises for that last wonderful treatment which was in fact only an assessment – I had *done* nothing at all; like the world champion runner who would limp at the same stride on which she had torn her hamstring several years before; like the 42 year old University Professor whose shoulder pain increased substantially on reading his MRI report. That was me. Clearly I fascinate myself, although I am way short of fully understanding me.

These experiences sometimes stir my heart but they always stir my mind. They convince me of the fearful and wonderful complexity that sits within every single patient or client any of us will ever see – an organism of unexampled sophistication, of such complicated internal connections, biological checks and balances, gobsmacking adaptability and predictive capacity that, may I humbly suggest, with respect to the STEM people among us, make 'The Universe' look rather dull. I suspect that, for one such as me, there can be no greater job on earth than to do research on humans.

But this address is not about me! It's about you! You have made it through your first, perhaps your second or even your *third* University degree. A great deal of fuss is being made about that. I used to think it was all a bit over the top: the costumes, the procession of academics – a ceremony consisting mainly of mysterious rituals that seemed to hold no inherent benefit in and of themselves.

However, I have since gained a deep appreciation for rituals. Inherent benefit is not the point – rituals are instead sticky connectors – between us and the people, places and times we value most. I have also gained a deep appreciation for ceremonies, which collect and collate

rituals. Insofar as life can be viewed as the ability to internally action a response to a stimulus, then it is perfectly reasonable to suggest that ceremonies such as this can enhance life itself.

There is of course special meaning for me today. I am very grateful to have shared the PhD journeys of two outstanding young women who graduate today - Dr Tory Madden and Dr Sarah Wallwork; and the Honours journey of new physiotherapists Monique Wilson, Jack Beard & Louisa Edwards. It is a massive opportunity too, to be able to look my parents in the eye as they sit there in the front row, and publically declare how grateful I am for almost five decades of patient and unswerving commitment to me - the youngest and least predictable of their boys - I am indescribably grateful. But the biggest thrill today? To see, next to my parents, my own beautiful family - Anna, Charlotte and Henry - my connections to you all, through everyday rituals, are very sticky indeed and drive me to never, ever, make work my top priority in life.

And to you all - may I remind you of one thing because of its clear and present relevance to you at this stage of your journeys. In the words of a true modern day hero - Nelson Mandela -

“A good head and good heart are always a formidable combination. But when you add to that a literate tongue or pen, then you have something very special.”

Take this specialness and change the world.