



Speech at the Graduation on May 23rd 2015

Distinguished Guests, Parents, Staff at Red Cross Nordic, First years, and especially Dear Graduates.

It is a great pleasure and a great honour to be asked to give a speech at the Graduation and to address the Graduates and such an international audience as you are today. I have been looking very much forward to this.

First of all, on behalf of the Board I will thank all the people here at the college for their unique work and devotion. Thank you to the support staff, the maintenance staff, the kitchen staff, the pastoral care teams, the administration, the teachers as well as the management team. They do and they have done a superb piece of work in order to give you students a fantastic stay here in the last two years. Each team do their work in their area and they-we are all dependent of each other. Together they create a unique environment to educate and develop young people in order to prepare them to their future education and life. Let's give all these people a hand.

I will allow myself to put forward one person today. Three years ago I had the pleasure of being a part of the selection of a new rektor for the college. It was indeed a long process and not like anything what I had experienced before. But it was very exciting and after a lot of meetings we decided for Mr. Richard Lamont, Larry. On behalf of the Board and myself I can truly say that we have never regretted it. Larry has now been in office 1000 days, well, as a matter of fact it is 995 days, I have counted them. You have done a tremendous job at the college, you have moved it forward, you have modernised it, you have made a good college even better. I know that some of you students do not always agree in the decisions taken by Larry, but I can assure you that everything is done for the benefit of students. Thank you, Larry, for the first 1000 days, we hope for more thousand days to come for you and Kathini.

And now to you, who are in the focus today, the Graduates. How are you? Are you happy because it is all over now? Or are you sad because it is all over now? I suppose that you all have mixed feelings. The examinations have finished, and you can just wait for your final Grades and the IB-Diploma.

Yes, you did it! On the other hand you are now to leave this unique place and all the wonderful friends you have got in the past two years. And for some of you it might have developed to more than just a friend. The first time I witnessed an audience like you today was in 1993, when I, as an IB-examiner, had the pleasure to visit Atlantic College in Wales. I participated in the morning assembly and I was spell bound. Wow, what a place! I still clearly remember that day in the old castle. And now I will ask you: Do you remember the first time, you heard about

the UWC? Do you remember when you decided to apply for the UWC? Do you remember the selection process? Do you remember the moment, when you were told that you were selected for Red Cross Nordic? And do you clearly remember the travel to Norway and the reception in Bergen or Oslo and especially here in Flekke? I am convinced that it is something you will never forget. In the meantime you have had two fantastic years at this college. Well, there have been good days and not so good days, days with ups and days with downs. There have been euphoric times and there have been days when you just wanted to go home. I can tell you by experience that as time goes by you will only remember the good things and the funny stories. In a short while it is all over. It is possible that Chris Hamper and his team have told you that time have linear progression. That is not true. Time accelerate, don't you feel so? The first months here at RCN went really slowly, but your last year began yesterday? Time run faster and faster, where are the two years? They have gone, but you keep them in your minds and in your hearts. You will always look back upon the two years by the fjord between the mountains as something very special. They formed you and they were determining for your life. Here at Red Cross Nordic you have found friends and a network, which you will have for the rest of your life.

After today you move on to different parts of the world, to new challenges in further education and later on hopefully an interesting and rewarding employment. You want a carrier, of course, but remember the spirit and the essence of UWC, there is much more in life than your personal development. It is just as much the responsibility and the caring for others as well as the surrounding and the environment, so we all can look forward to a better world.

I will finish my speech by quoting a former Graduate of my own school. His name is Piet Hein and he graduated in 1924. He is, among other things, famous for solving a traffic problem in Stockholm by constructing the superellipse, but he also wrote over 10.000 Grooks, small sentences/poems with a twist. This Grook is for you:

Living is
A thing you do
Now or never -
Which do you?

We wish you all the best in the future!