

Congratulations.

I know how much this day is special to you – and also to your partners, parents, families and friends, who have supported, loved and worried their way through your courses and exams over many years.

Congratulations and thank you too, to your teachers.

But today belongs to you. It is liberating, exciting – and a little daunting.

Today I want to talk to you about happiness, work, health, design and Marxism - Leninism.

Happiness was enshrined by the founders of the United States as a right in the Declaration of Independence.

Thomas Jefferson's elegantly penned the words: "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness".

This notion of happiness was for individuals to realise their promise without the restrictions of class, religion or race.

In Bhutan, there is an official concept of happiness. This measure of work/life balance is called gross national happiness.

On this day when we celebrate your academic success, I want to emphasise the importance of happiness.

Happiness is emotional and mental wellbeing.

Happiness boosts one's immune system and endurance. It sparks creativity and productivity. Married men are more likely to be happier than single men. The jury is however out for married women.

Jefferson's formulation "the pursuit of happiness", for me, sums up what is great about America and what is wrong with America. That happiness is worth pursuing and having seems self-evidently true. It is a noble, liberating and human concept.

It is very much an American idea – it is hard to imagine the British or German or French or Japanese or Chinese having such a national goal.

Perhaps the world would be a better place if they did.

It's a great idea, but it has problems, firstly it is very individualistic and secondly and most importantly it seems to me it contains an inherent flaw – happiness cannot be pursued in the way wealth and material possession and success can.

Remember the farmer who had the goose that laid the golden egg – once the farmer pursued the gold he ended up destroying its source and was left with nothing. You cannot chase happiness, just as you cannot chase love.

To misquote Lennon, John that is, “Happiness is what happens when you are busy making other plans”.

So the pursuit of happiness often becomes the pursuit of material comfort. What did Marx say, “Money cannot buy you happiness and happiness cannot buy you money”. That was Groucho Marx by the way....

However Leo Rosten tellingly said: “Money can't buy happiness, but neither can poverty”.

So what makes you happy and what has it to do with today's graduation.

In terms of your working lives, I would like to offer these thoughts.

There is a difference between a job and a profession and a profound difference between these and a vocation.

A job provides income and a profession confers status.

But they are something quite separate from a vocation.

A vocation is more important.

It is essential to a lifetime of happiness.

A vocation will drive and satisfy your life.

In my own experience, I gained professional skills as a teacher and studied law.

But my true calling was politics.

I realised this when I was 30 years old.

I look back and realise the first spark of interest in politics began at primary school.

As a 10-year-old, I followed politics the way other kids loved football.

It was my calling and when I eventually listened – my life changed.

You now have a degree and many will have found or identified jobs....even in these difficult economic times....but have you heard your calling?

I have an ulterior motive in speaking to you today. I have a personal stake in your lives.

Social services and our built environment will soon be entrusted to you.

We have a joint interest in getting the quality of life right for many hundreds of thousands of people.

You would be well aware that two very different groups co-exist in South Australia: one group suffering diseases of affluence, and others coping with poverty, particularly in indigenous communities.

It has been my determination to transform this State's public health system. Part of that means promoting good design.

Good design will be seen in terms of sustainable buildings, welcoming public places and in re-

engineered jobs.

We are putting in place an integrated health system which is not just about acute illness – or emergency patients in hospitals.

We are changing the way we treat new mothers, families and people with chronic disease so prevention and wellbeing is the focus.

It's a completely different design of health care.

It's one where doctors, scientists, nurses, health care workers and paramedics co-ordinate care in centres of excellence, like the new Royal Adelaide Hospital and rebuilt Flinders Medical Centre and expanded Lyell McEwin.

We will see more GP Plus Health Care Centres closer to where you live.

This plan is just the beginning. You can find out more of its detail. I hope you will – and then write its next chapter.

I am delighted the University of South Australia encourages graduates to explore opportunities for collaborations with research, community, government and business experts.

I trust you will develop long-term solutions to create a more positive, sustainable future for South Australia – and places beyond.

In closing,

You have the ability to make a profound difference to many lives.

The community counts on your vision.

I urge you to be responsive, creative and pursue your vocation.

And be, happy... As Marcus Aurelius said in un-liberated days. "A man's happiness is to do a man's true work" In other words you can't chase happiness but if you get on with life in a moral and positive way it will find you!