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Steve Jobs, the founder and CEO of Apple Computers imparted wisdom from his life to the 2005 graduating class at Stanford University. The 50 year old Jobs built his speech around the themes of connecting the dots, love and loss, and death.

Jobs began his speech by briefly telling his path to becoming the innovator he was, mentioning his difficult childhood, with his mother giving Jobs up to be adopted by college graduates. However, this didn’t happen and Jobs found himself having loving foster parents that didn’t live up to his birth mother’s hopes.

Jobs studied at Reed College in Portland, Oregon, a college was college which Jobs described as “almost as expensive as Stanford”. Jobs lost interested in taking core classes after his few months and saw the financial strain it put on his parents and decided to drop out of college. However, Jobs did spent the next year as a drop-in student, scraping to get by, while taking unique courses like calligraphy.

Jobs ended his first story by pointing out that although calligraphy lacked purpose when he first learned it, Jobs said “that when he and Woz (Steve Wozniak) were designing the McIntosh computer, it all came back to me”. Jobs said that connecting the dots is something that links the past decisions to the future, and encouraged the students to follow their hearts and reflect on their past decisions.

Following that Jobs told the story of Apple’s growth and how his passion had fueled innovation. To keep up the growing and expanding ideas, Jobs brought in John Sculley, a former Pepsi-Cola executive to help run the business. Apple at this point was a publicly traded company and Sculley and Jobs disagree on direction.

Jobs was fired Apple after working there for 10 years, due to the company being public, Jobs was no longer majority owner. Jobs said that “30 (years old) he was out and very publicly out” and felt like leaving the Silicon Valley and apologizing for “letting the previous generation of entrepreneurs down”, particularly David Packer and Bob Noyce.

However, Jobs passion for career could not be denied as he went onto develop NeXT and Pixar Animation. Jobs said that this was possible because Apple fired him, re-igniting the fire to create and innovate again. During this period Jobs also met his wife Laurene Powell. Jobs was brought back into Apple when they bought NeXT, whose hardware and ideas are the base for Apple’s current computers.

Jobs finished by stating if one loves their career, then amazing things can be achieved. Sometimes life hands out harsh doses of reality, but those with heart and passion can overcome life’s greatest struggles.

Lastly, Jobs talked about death and its inevitability. Jobs said that his way of evaluating his life was getting up and looking in the mirror and asking “if today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am to do today”. Jobs said that anytime the answer to that question has been no a few days in a row that something has to change.

Jobs said that fearing death, even though it is certain for everyone will one from truly living. Still, Jobs is not naïve enough death that it should not completely be un-feared, but rather acknowledging its existence allows one to make decisions going forward. Jobs mentioned his own brush with death having been diagnosed and surviving Pancreatic Cancer, and Jobs saying that plans to live a few more decades.

Jobs closed his story about death clarifying that “no one wants to die, even those who want to go to heaven don’t want to die to get there”. However, Jobs said that death is necessary as clears out the old to make room for the new. Jobs closing message to the students was an echo the final message that of Whole Earth Catalog, a publication from Jobs youth that said to “stay hungry, stay foolish”.