**Song Speech [EZ Speech No. 16103]**

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Remarks by Mr. Seon Song to be presented to his fellow graduates on the occasion of their graduation from South Bayo University.

ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, fellow graduates: i’m honored to have been asked to share my thoughts with you this [morning/afternoon/ evening] on the occasion of our graduation from sbu.

[pause]

there’s a story that’s come down to us from china’s ming dynasty about a doctor who was detained by the furious relatives of a patient he’d kiled with the wrong prescri-tion, and who’d escaped by swimming across a wide, tur-bulent river to reach his home. when he entered and saw his son studying medical texts in front of the fire, he said to him, “Don’t be in such a hurry to study medicine, my son. first things first. and first: learn to swim!”

[pause for laugh or chuckle — hopefully!]

the ancient doctors in whose footsteps we now proud-ly follow, had much wisdom. and obviously, if the medi-cine they practiced for more than 5,000 years hadn’t worked, there wouldn’t be any *modern* chinese doctors today. But their ministrations *did* work. their “papers” and poltices and potions *did* cure disease, alleviate suf-fering, and improve the quality of life for their pati-ents.

you know, it remains something of a mystery to me why big pharma continues to develop drugs that do the same things that oriental medicines do, despite the fact that, in almost every case, the man-made product has more, and more serious, side effects than its natural count-erpart. go figure!

now, the ancient chinese doctors didn’t need formal degrees to practice their brand of medicine. Yes . . . there were what you might call “med schools” back then, but really the curriculum they taught there was much, much broader than just medicine. besides, even if their students *got* degrees and deplomas and certificates, it wouldn’t’ve done ‘em any good to frame them, since not one in 10 of their patients could read or write in the first place.

today, of course, we need degrees. we need to have some widely-acceptable means of proving we’re legit. We need some kind of [air quotes] “ammunition” to use against the forces — both governmental and private — that — even today — are mobilized against us, trying to sully our profession and undermine its validity in the public mind.

but beyond this, i actually think it’s a good idea for the profession of acupuncture and oriental medicine to demand the kind of rigor, discipline, and learning that’re synonymous with a college education.

[holding up a rolled-up piece of paper] i for one am damned proud to have earned this degree, as i guess all of you out there are, too. and once you’re in the field for a while and you look back on the six years’ you spent at south bayo, you’ll realize that you’ve received an absolutely first-class education from a world-class institution — an education that will now make it possible for you to go out and make a good and honorable living as a doctor of acupuncture and oriental medicine. in the word’s of an ancient chinese proverb: *“your teach-ers open the door, but you must enter by yourself.”*

now as most of you know, i’ve already walked through that door and have spent a little time out in the field. i’ve experienced some of the suspicion, ignorance, and fear that the western-bio-medical establishment contin-ues to try to promote in the public at large. I’ve must admit, too, that i’ve certainly known of more than one AOM practitioner who’s either misled or mistreated or misguided his patients. such cases are few and far be-tween, but as you might suppose, they’re always the ones that make the headlines.

you’ll also find out (if you don’t know this already) that the medical insurance establishment in this country has yet to fully recognized the efficacy of acupuncture and oriental medicine in reducing morbidity and mortali-ty and improving overall health. chiropractors faced this same battle, and finally won it, more than two decades ago, so now the bulk of their service offerings are covered by most plans. we’re still playing catch-up.

despite these barriers and obstacles, however, i can tell you from personal experience that the field of acupunture and oriental medicine can be a wonderfully rewarding one. For the moment, we’re done with our studies. now it’s time, as the old chinese doctor said, for us to swim. the healthcare ocean awaits.

so as we all now don our bathing suits and get ready to jump in, i’d like to share with you three little bits of advice that i think will ultimately prove to be the keys to your success:

first, ***respect the tradition.*** to transpose an ancient chinese proverb: *“know the new . . . but respect the old.”*

second, ***respect your education.*** you were taught *by* the best to *be* the best, at one of the finest universities in our field. you know what you’re doing; go out and do it to the best of your ability!

and finally, ***respect the profession***. our healing arts and sciences have worked for five thousand years. ours is a noble and necessary profession. may we all prove to be worthy of its standards!

thank you.

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