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Part A Group Interaction

Below is an excerpt from the speech of Mr Wong Yan Lung

The Honorary Graduates' Speech
190th Congregation 2014
Mr Wong Yan Lung

"Has Hong Kong changed?" It is a question we often hear nowadays. Changes can bring progress. Changes can also mean decline. But changes are inevitable. The University is the cradle for the forces of change. It is the place where our young people develop the readiness and resilience to face changes. Changes are inevitable because of diversity in life. Human interests are diverse; human opinions even more so. Different interests and views divide people rather than uniting them. What holds a society together is a higher and transcending consensus in the form of a shared set of values, upon which the operation of society is fastened....

What can we hold on to when changes come to overwhelm us like tsunamis, or when they come to soak us quietly like ripples? How do we take changes positively and courageously, so that we can pick up the surfboard, leave the shore, and ride on the waves of changes? On essentials, may we go for integrity; on non-essentials, liberty, and on all things, charity.

On essentials, integrity...

"Core values" is perhaps one of the most commonly used terms these days. "Core values" very often are equated with a cause or an ideology, and sometimes with a host of rights and freedoms. What can be easily forgotten, however, is this: It is not the cause itself, but the people who are supposed to benefit from this cause. That is far more important. We do need passion if we are to do any thing well. Yet passion is but the horsepower; it cannot replace the engine itself. The engine still needs to work with precision and accuracy. ..

Once established with rigorous examination and firm conviction, the essentials must be guarded at all costs.

(Excerpt)

You are a member of Civic Society and your group is responsible for a sharing on the above speech on morning assembly. You are meeting to discuss what to include in the talk. You may want to talk about:

- Who the target audience are
- What changes bring progress
- How people can benefit from "core values"
- Why integrity is the "essential" core value

A Lesson Plan on Oral – DSE English Language Paper IV (Group Discussion)

Time: 80 minutes

Class: S5 / 6

Objectives:

1. To recall students' advanced reading skills
2. To develop cognitive abilities of comprehension and application
3. To enhance interacting skills

Time	Activity	Remarks
5 mins	Goal Setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● T clearly briefs Ss on objectives of the lesson. ● T reminds Ss to closely check self-progress. 	
10 mins	Revisiting advanced reading skills of scanning and skimming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● T distributes Task to Ss and asks Ss to suggest genre of reading material and target audience by the title of the article. ● T asks Ss to read carefully the task at the bottom of the article to help efficient scanning and skimming. ● T asks Ss to finish reading it within 2 mins to find out possible answers for the Discussion prompts (no writing is allowed) ● Ss read silently. ● T asks Ss to discuss the answers in pairs. ● T select 2 pairs of Ss for sharing the answers (1 pair of high achievers and 1 medium) ● T praises able students and encourages less able ones. ● T stresses the shallowness of answers would not bring forth a good discussion. 	Ss are urged to read at a fast speed with the task in mind
15 mins	Practicing comprehensive skills of detailed study <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ss are given another 2 mins to read. ● T informs Ss that high lighting is allowed ● T reminds Ss to have the discussion prompts in mind when high lighting. ● After 2 mins. Ss should stop reading and start to complete worksheet 1 in 5 mins. ● After 5 mins, Ss are reminded to use the last 1 min to summarize the answers in mind. ● Ss again discuss the answers in pairs. ● T again chooses 2 pairs for answer sharing. ● T stresses the improvement in answering due to the mastery of comprehensive skills. 	
30 mins	Practicing interacting skills of making suggestions, giving reasons and asking for an explanation	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● T revisits the 3 interacting skills with Ss. ● T reminds Ss to intentionally and skillfully practice the 3 skills in the following exercise. ● Ss get into groups of 4, and choose one of them to be the observer; he/she should be responsible for counting the total no. of the above skills used by each speaker and report to class afterwards. ● Ss are given 6 mins for the discussion. ● T walks around to observe Ss' performance. ● After the termination of discussion, T asks the observer of each group to report on the total no. of the 3 skills used by each speaker. ● T gives feedback on the result and stresses that the "yes, I agree", "I absolutely agree" and "That's good/great" carry no weight in such an exercise and in a real situation. ● T encourages Ss to give detail and substantial answers. ● T reminds Ss the importance of effective vocabulary input. ● T invites each group to suggest 2 to 3 vocabularies that they think are useful to make up a large pool on BB. ● T makes comments on the suitability of vocabulary and suggests some to class (use a chalk of different colour for ease of reference) 	The observer is given a small table to tick so as to facilitate the counting duty
15 mins	<p>Enhancing the 3 skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ss again get into groups, this time of 4. They are given 8 mins to do the discussion. ● T walks around to observe the performance of Ss to see if they use a broader vocabulary and more frequent application of the skills. ● After the termination of discussion, T asks Ss to write a short self reflection on the performance of the 2nd discussion. ● T then invites Ss to share the self reflection. ● T finally shares with Ss his/her observation and more importantly, the ways to make improvement. 	Ss fill out the self reflection part of the worksheet
5 mins	<p>Summing up the lesson</p> <p>T summarizes the lesson by stating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Objectives of the lesson, and asks Ss to check if they achieve so. ● The importance of building up a broad vocabulary. ● The ways to make improvement in group discussion. 	

Worksheet One

Name:

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The target audience:

Changes that bring progress

The core values

How people benefit from them

Integrity is essential because

My vocabulary list

Self Reflection (My strength & weakness and how improvement can be made)

For the observer

Please tick each time the speaker uses the skills below:

Interacting Skills	Student A	Student B	Student C
Making suggestions			
Giving reasons			
Asking for an explanation			

For teachers' reference, below is the speech of Mr Wong

The Honorary Graduates' Speeches
190th Congregation (2014)

Presented by WONG Yan Lung

Mr. Pro-Chancellor, Chairman of Council, Vice-Chancellor, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of all the Honorary Graduands, may I extend to the University our sincere gratitude for conferring upon us these exceptional honours, and to Professor Wilkinson for your kind words of citations.

"Has Hong Kong changed?" It is a question we often hear nowadays. Changes can bring progress. Changes can also mean decline. But changes are inevitable. The University is the cradle for the forces of change. It is the place where our young people develop the readiness and resilience to face changes. Changes are inevitable because of diversity in life. Human Interests are diverse; human opinions even more so. Different interests and views divide people rather than uniting them. What holds a society together is a higher and transcending consensus in the form of a shared set of values, upon which the operation of society is fastened.

It sounds all too familiar and cliché. However, when Kevin Lau, former editor of Ming Pao and fellow alumni of this University was brutally attacked last month, the core of that societal consensus was wounded. The baseline fundamentals are being shaken. The shock went beyond the natural abhorrence to the violence and cruelty. The horrendous act has stirred up a much graver and wider concern: how could such dangers and threats still exist in Hong Kong today terrorizing those who are but dedicated to their calling? The alarm bell is ringing loud, culminating in an equally intense determination to ensure that none of our cherished common values will be impaired. And as we see the increasing polarization of Hong Kong, with opposing camps of demonstrators shouting abuses at each other and even descending into scuffles, with more extreme and irrational clashes among different groupings on the Internet, we know the scope of our hitherto precarious consensus is dwindling fast.

What can we hold on to when changes come to overwhelm us like tsunamis, or when they come to soak us quietly like ripples? How do we take changes positively and courageously, so that we can pick up the surfboard, leave the shore, and ride on the waves of changes? On essentials, may we go for integrity; on non-essentials, liberty, and on all things, charity.

On essentials, integrity

The determination between the essential and the non-essential is often subjective, controversial and even philosophical. However, the active pursuit of the demarcation between the two is necessary for the well-being of the individual as well as the community. Because identifying and fortifying something as one's personal essential can have far-reaching consequences, the task should be undertaken with the greatest of care and as a continuous process. Take the protection of rights as an example. Rights are not mere desires or needs. Even for rights protected under the Basic Law and the Bill of Rights, some are more fundamental than others. As held by the Courts, the degree of inviolability differs amongst those rights, and the margin of appreciation can apply to some but not others.

"Core values" is perhaps one of the most commonly used terms these days. "Core values" very often are equated with a cause or an ideology, and sometimes with a host of rights and freedoms. What can be easily forgotten, however, is this: It is not the cause itself, but the people who are supposed to benefit from this cause, that is far more important. We do need passion if we are to do anything well. Yet passion is but the horsepower; it cannot replace the engine itself. The engine still needs to work with precision and accuracy. Can the people really benefit from what we are advocating and fighting for, or is it just our own passion being satisfied, or our own belief being vindicated, or our own ego being feathered?

However, once established with rigorous examination and firm conviction, the essentials must be guarded at all costs.

First, we must guard our essentials against invasion: when Kevin was attacked, it was not just the elementary law and order, or the right to life and security of the person, that have been violated. The right to the freedom of opinion and of the press, going beyond the individual's interests, has been subjected to intimidation. To quote from an ancient Egyptian word of wisdom, "To take no notice of a violent attack is to strengthen the heart of the enemy. Vigour is valiant, but cowardice is vile." When violence strikes to subdue legitimate rights, it is striking at the very fabric of our civil society, and our community has rightly responded with united and strong condemnation. The community must react with the strong hands of the law: let no criminal go unpunished.

We - and particularly those who are in the front line exercising those rights - must react courageously. Respond with the confidence that even the iron knife will break in the bare but righteous hands joined together. Respond with retribution but not revenge, respond with a renewed determination to exercise our rights even more responsibly and to perform our duties even more diligently. This is by far the more effective way to protect any right we advocate, so that the inherent virtue of the right or freedom being protected can be seen. The conquest is not by battle alone but more by the demonstration of trustworthy custodianship. That has often been overlooked and, sadly, the excessive

and abusive use of rights by some turned out to be the most destructive agent of those cherished rights.

Secondly, we must guard the essentials against the more subtle erosion. Integrity is the vigilance and resistance against the gradual abrasion. Integrity is the moral strength to resist temptations, to put the essentials above one self and one's interests. In the wise counsel of the Proverbs¹: "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life." Don't become, as C.S. Lewis described, "men with no chest", who are deficient in the moral force to turn his head knowledge of virtues into practical power to overcome his animal instincts.

The rule of law is not only the framework, but the entire environment, in which basic rights and freedoms are safeguarded, and by which fairness and justice are being maintained. Like the natural environment, it is vulnerable to slow and gradual changes. We have to be particularly vigilant in our unprecedented constitutional order of One Country Two Systems, where interfaces between the two different legal systems between the Mainland and Hong Kong have generated novel issues with immense legal intricacies and profound political implications, and where judicial adjudication of any constitutional debates is required to simultaneously satisfy both the Basic Law and the common law, as well as the justice of the case. The heightened vigilance to protect the rule of law is also necessitated by the rapid integration between Hong Kong and the Mainland in the social and economic realms. Temptations abound with big moneys flowing in. Having overseen public prosecutions for 7 years and now back in private practice in the commercial field, I can testify that money corrupts and a lot of money corrupts massively.

We will be the best guardians of the rule of law, the indisputable essential, when people less familiar with it can see that we will not trade it for any personal gain or convenience. The values we champion can be best realised and kept if we embrace them in our everyday life: showing respect for the law, insisting on fair play, sticking to honesty, and being honourable in the fields of business, vocation, competition, and other forms of human interactions. The real challenge is not so much denouncing the plain and monstrous evil. The real worry lies in our propensity to permit the lesser evils to slip in gradually. The law is not observed merely as formality but substance. The rule of law is truly observed when we ourselves are not being observed.

Furthermore, cherish and guard our judicial independence. That is the bedrock. While no individual judges are infallible and the high quality of the judiciary must be maintained, the public must respect the judiciary as an institution and as the gatekeeper of the rule of law. Judicial decisions may not always be popular or politically correct. It will be a very sad day if they are. As the Chief Justice said at the Opening of the Legal Year, although disputes between the parties before the Court may have political, economic or social consequences, such as those cases involving matters of government policy, at all times the courts look only to the legal issues that divide the parties.

On non-essentials: Liberty

Now onto non-essentials, quite the opposite. For applying the same hard-edged regimen to non-essentials makes one obstructive, destructive and an unnecessary stumbling block to the fostering of any meaningful consensus, agreement or cooperation.

Reluctance to change with times, due to insecurity, ignorance, idiosyncrasies, or sheer idleness leads to stagnation. For an economy like Hong Kong, grandeur or decline depends on how resilient and adaptable we are. Hong Kong cannot afford to be inward looking or self-complacent. Liberty on non-essentials allows us to respect, even if we cannot embrace, people who are different, people of different races, cultures or places of origin, people who think differently, speak differently or behave differently. I have heard lamentations that some of our young people today shun competition, particularly competition coming from outside of Hong Kong. They resort to different forms of protectionism or escapism, and camouflage them by grand facade. The "indigenous culture" and "the Hong Kong identity", which are of course precious in themselves, are unfortunately deployed as a convenient exit from the race that must be run. Instead of seeking "globalization", some have retired into "tribalization". On this type of soil, prejudice and discrimination, particularly on account of race, culture or background, spring up like weeds. Legitimate differences, fanned by some unfortunate scramble for limited resources, escalate into causes for intolerance, blame, repulsion, and even open conflicts. That will certainly bring Hong Kong down. Liberty on non-essentials also breaks the inertia to changes within oneself. It is the lifeline to creativity. It prepares the mind to be stimulated upon encountering differences and changes. It sets the mind free to depart from the old and conformist ways. It is the energy in the new waves that works powerfully within the person.

On all things: Charity

Finally, what underpins integrity? What refines the moral steel? What summons courage? What motives the pursuit of goodness above self interests? Conversely, what breeds violence? What spawns hatred? What brings about discrimination? What gives birth to cowardice? What results in compromise? Is my home a castle or is it a refuge? Are my possessions personal takings or accessible resources? Am I "the one and only" or am I just "one of the many"? So much depends on the attitude of the individuals and the culture of the community they build: keen to grab or dare to give.

Look to the movies (the good ones I mean): there are certain universal or eternal themes or endings that bring comfort, warmth and a very satisfying sense of wellness. Why? Because they are in line with what the human soul longs and aspires for. These soothing things need not be confined to productions of the "Dream Factory". Dreams can give rise to long-term goals and short-term objectives. There are still many "real people and real things" in Hong Kong that touch our hearts: "Ming Gor" who runs the "Canteen for the Poor" in Shamshuipo; the late Dr. Chung Chi-yung of Shue Yan University who gave up her all for the grooming of the young; and many more around you and me, who have gone unnoticed.

Many of the "real things" we do not see, and therefore we play no part in them, because we are all too busy with our lives, our business, our career, our family, our children, and our own pursuit of excellence of one kind or another. On top of the pursuit of excellence, perhaps we should emphasize more the pursuit of the purpose of attaining excellence. In this race of life, if the ultimate prize cannot be shared, it is of limited value. If the crown does not come with the calling to serve, it is but a corruptible one.

Amidst the changes and uncertainties, if we adorn all things with charity, there is still tremendous hope for Hong Kong.