

We Are What We Choose

What I want to talk to you about today is the difference between gifts and choices. Cleverness is a gift, kindness is a choice. Gifts are easy—they're given, after all. Choices can be hard. You can seduce yourself with your gifts if you're not careful, and if you do, it'll probably be to the detriment of your choices.

This is a group with many gifts. I'm sure one of your gifts is the gift of a smart and capable brain. Your smarts will come in handy because you will travel in a land of marvels. We humans will astonish ourselves. We'll invent ways to generate clean energy and a lot of it. Atom by atom, we'll assemble tiny machines that will enter cell walls and make repairs. I believe you'll even see us understand the human brain. As a civilization, We will have so many gifts, just as you as individuals have so many individual gifts as you sit before me. How will you use these gifts? And will you take pride in your gifts or pride in your choices?

After much consideration, I took the less safe path to follow my passion, and I'm proud of that choice. I will hazard a prediction. When you are 80 years old, and in a quiet moment of reflection narrating for only yourself the most personal version of your life story, the telling that will be most compact and meaningful will be the series of choices you have made. In the end, we are in choices. Build yourself a great story. Thank you good luck!