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## TIM COOK

### SERVE HUMANITY

<https://youtu.be/E7bpYaxgC5o>

*Sometimes, the very technology that is meant to connect us divides us. I'm not worried about artificial intelligence giving computers the ability to think like humans. I'm more concerned about people thinking like computers, without values or compassion, without concern for consequences.*

Hello, MIT!

Thank you. Congratulations, Class of 17. I especially want to thank Chairman Millard, President Reif, distinguished faculty trustees, and members of the Class of 1967. It's a privilege to be with you today, with your families and your friends, on such an amazing, important day. MIT and Apple share so much. We both love hard problems.

We love to search for new ideas. And we especially love finding those ideas, the really big ones, the ones that can change the world. I know MIT has a proud tradition of pranks, or as you would call them, hacks. And you've had, pulled off, some pretty great ones over the years. I'll never figure out how MIT students sent that Mars rover to the Kresge Oval, or put a propeller beanie on the Great Dome, or how you've obviously taken over the President's Twitter account.

I can tell college students are behind it because most of the tweets happen at 3 a.m.

I'm really happy to be here. Today is about celebration, and you have so much to be proud of. As you leave here to start the next leg of your journey in life, there will be days where you will ask yourself, where is all this going? What is the purpose? What is my purpose? I'll be honest. I asked myself that same question, and it took me nearly 15 years to answer it.

Maybe by talking about my journey today, I can save you some time. The struggle for me started early on. In high school, I thought I'd discover my life's purpose when I could answer that age-old question, what do you want to be when you grow up? Nope. In college, I thought I would discover it when I could answer, what's your major?

Not quite. I thought that maybe I'd discover it when I found a good job. Then I thought I just needed to get a few promotions. That didn't work either. I kept convincing myself that it was just over the horizon, around the next corner.

Nothing worked, and it was really tearing me apart. Part of me kept pushing ahead to the next achievement, and the other part kept asking, is this all there is? I went to grad school at Duke looking for the answer. I tried meditation. I sought guidance in religion. I read great philosophers and authors. And in a moment of youthful indiscretion, I might even have experimented with a Windows PC.

And obviously that didn't work.

After countless twists and turns, at last, 20 years ago, my search brought me to Apple. At a time the company was struggling to survive, Steve Jobs had just returned to Apple and had launched the Think Different campaign. He wanted to empower the crazy ones, the misfits, the rebels, the troublemakers, the round pegs in the square holes to do their best work.

If we could just do that, Steve knew we could really change the world. Before that moment, I had never met a leader with such passion or encountered a company with such a clear and compelling purpose to serve humanity. It was just that simple. Serve humanity. And it was in that moment, after 15 years of searching, something clicked.

I finally felt aligned. Aligned with a company that brought together challenging, cutting-edge work with a higher purpose. Aligned with a leader who believed that technology, which didn't exist yet, could reinvent tomorrow's world. Aligned with myself and my own deep need to serve something greater. Of course, at that moment, I didn't know all of that.

I was just grateful to have that psychological burden lifted. But with the help of hindsight, my breakthrough makes a lot more sense. I was never going to find my purpose working someplace without a clear sense of purpose of its own. Steve and

Apple freed me to throw my whole self into my work. To embrace their mission and make it my own.

How can I serve humanity? This is life's biggest and most important question. When you work towards something greater than yourself, you find meaning. You find purpose. So the question I hope you will carry forward from here is how will you serve humanity? The good news is since you're here today, you're already on a great track.

At MIT, you've learned how much power science and technology have to change the world for the better. Thanks to discoveries made right here, billions of people are leading healthier, more productive, more fulfilling lives. And if we are ever going to solve some of the hardest problems still facing the world today, everything from cancer to climate change to educational inequality, then technology will help us do it.

But technology alone isn't the solution. And sometimes, it's even part of the problem. Last year, I had the chance to meet with Pope Francis. It was the most incredible meeting of my life. This is a man who has spent more time comforting the afflicted in slums than he has with heads of state. This may surprise you, but he knew an unbelievable amount about technology.

It was obvious to me that he had thought deeply about it. Its opportunities, its risks, its morality. What he said to me at that meeting, what he preached really, was on a topic we care a lot about at Apple. But he expressed a shared concern in a powerful new way. Never has humanity had such power over itself, yet nothing ensures that it will be used wisely, he has said.

Technology today is integral to almost all aspects of our lives. And most of the time, it's a force for good. And yet, the potential adverse consequences are spreading faster and cutting deeper than ever before. Threats to our security, threats to our privacy, fake news, and social media that becomes antisocial.

Sometimes, the very technology that is meant to connect us divides us. Technology is capable of doing great things, but it doesn't want to do great things. It doesn't want anything. That part takes all of us. It takes our values and our commitment to our families and our neighbors and our communities. Our love of beauty and belief that all of our fates are interconnected.

Our decency. Our kindness.

I'm not worried about artificial intelligence giving computers the ability to think like humans. I'm more concerned about people thinking like computers, without values or compassion, without concern for consequences. That is what we need you to help us guard against. Because if science is a search in the darkness, then the humanities are a candle that shows us where we've been and the danger that lies ahead.

As Steve once said, technology alone is not enough. It is technology married with the liberal arts, married with the humanities that make our hearts sing. When you keep people at the center of what you do, it can have an enormous impact. It means an iPhone that allows a blind person to run a marathon. It means an Apple Watch that catches a heart condition before it becomes a heart attack.

It means an iPad that helps a child with autism connect with his or her world. In short, it means technology infused with your values, making progress possible for everyone. Whatever you do in your life, and whatever we do at Apple, we must infuse it with the humanity that each of us is born with. That responsibility is immense, but so is the opportunity.

I'm optimistic because I believe in your generation, your passion, your journey to serve humanity. We are all counting on you. There is so much out there conspiring to make you cynical. The internet has enabled so much and empowered so many. But it can also be a place where basic rules of decency are suspended and pettiness and negativity thrive.

Don't let that noise knock you off course. Don't get caught up in the trivial aspects of life. Don't listen to trolls, and for God's sake, don't become one. Measure your impact on humanity not in likes, but in the lives you touch. Not in popularity, but in the people you serve. I found that my life got bigger when I stopped caring what other people thought about me.

You will find yours will, too. Stay focused on what really matters. There will be times when your resolve to serve humanity will be tested. Be prepared. People will try to convince you that you should keep your empathy out of your career. Don't accept this false premise.

At a shareholder's meeting a few years back, someone questioned Apple's investment and focus on the environment. He asked me to pledge that Apple would only invest in green initiatives that could be justified with a return on investment. I tried to be diplomatic. I pointed out that Apple does many things, like accessibility features for those with disabilities, that don't rely on an ROI.

We do these things because they're the right thing to do, and protecting the environment is a critical example. He wouldn't let it go, and I got my blood up. So I told him, if you can't accept our position, you shouldn't own Apple stock. When you're convinced that your cause is right, have the courage to take a stand.

If you see a problem or an injustice, recognize that no one will fix it but you. As you go forward today, use your minds and hands and your hearts to build something bigger than yourselves. Always remember, there is no idea bigger than this. As Doctor Martin Luther King said, all life is interrelated. We are all bound together into a single garment of destiny.

If you keep that idea at the forefront of all that you do, if you choose to live your lives at that intersection between technology and the people it serves, if you strive to create the best, give the best, do the best for everyone, not just for some, then today, all of humanity has good cause for hope.

Thank you very much, and congratulations class of 2017!

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