

SUBSCRIBE
NEW SPEECH EVERY WEEKEND!

ENGLISH SPEECHES

WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES



ROBERT DE NIRO

NEXT!

<https://youtu.be/rZ58eU07UI4>

Dean Green, deans, University Leadership, faculty, staff, parents, friends, and the 2015 class of New York University's TISCH School of the Arts.

Thank you for inviting me to celebrate with you today. TISCH graduates, you made it!

And you're fucked. Think about that. The graduates from the college of nursing, they all have jobs. The graduates from the college of dentistry, fully employed. The Leonard M Stern School of Business graduates, they're covered. The School of Medicine graduates, each one will get a job. The proud graduates of the NY School of Law, they're covered, and if they're not, who cares? They're lawyers. The English majors are not a factor. They'll be home writing their novels. Teachers, they'll all be working. Shitty jobs, lousy pay, but still working. The graduates in accounting they all have jobs. Where does that leave you? Envious of those accountants, I doubt that. They had a choice. Maybe they were passionate about accounting, but I think it's more likely that they used reason and logic and common sense to reach for a career that could give them the expectation of success and stability. Reason, logic, common sense? At the TISCH School of Arts? Are you kidding me?

But you didn't have that choice, did you? You discovered a talent, recognised your ambition and developed a passion. When you feel that you can't fight it, you just go with it. When it comes to the arts, passion should always trump common sense. You aren't just following dreams; you're reaching for your destiny. You're a dancer, a singer, a choreographer, a musician, a film maker, a writer, a photographer, a director, a producer, an actor, an artist. Yeah, you're fucked!

The good news is that that's not a bad place to start. Now that you've made your choice, or rather, succumbed to it, your path is clear. Not easy but clear. You have to keep working, it's that simple. You got through TISCH, that's a big deal, or to put it another way, you got through TISCH, big deal. Well, it's a start. On this day of triumphantly graduating a new door is opening for you. A door to a lifetime of rejection. It's inevitable. It's what graduates call the 'the real world'. You'll experience it auditioning for a part or a place in a company. It'll happen to you when you're looking for backers for a project. You'll feel it when door close on you when you're trying to get attention for something you have written, and when you're looking for a directing or choreographing job.

While preparing for my role today, I asked a few TISCH students for directions for this speech. The first thing they said was keep it short. And they said it's okay to give a bit of advice, it's kind of expected and no one will mind. And then they said, to keep it short.

It's difficult for me to come with advice for you who have already set upon your life's work, but I can tell you some of the things I tell my own children. First, whatever you do, don't go to TISCH School of the Arts. Get an accounting degree instead.

Then I contradict myself, and as corny as it sounds, I tell them don't be afraid to fail. I urge them to take chances, to keep an open mind, to welcome new experiences and new ideas. I tell them that if you don't go, you'll never know. You just have to be bold and go out there and take your chances. I tell them that if they go into the arts, I hope they find a nurturing and challenging community of like-minded individuals, a place like TISCH. If they find themselves with the talent and the burning desire to be in the performing arts, I tell them when you collaborate, you try to make everything better but you're not responsible for the entire project, only your part in it. You'll find yourself in movies or plays or concerts or dance pieces that turn out in the eyes of critics and audiences to be bad, but that's not on you, because you will put everything into everything that you do. You won't judge the characters you play, and shouldn't be distracted by judgments on the works you are in. Whether you are working for Ed Wood of Federico Fellini or Martin Scorsese, your commitment to your process will be the same.

By the way there will be times when your best is not enough. There can be many reasons for this, but as long as you give your best, it'll be okay. Did you get straight As at school? If so, good for you, congratulations, but in the real world you'll never get straight As again. There are ups and there are downs. And what I want to say to you today is that it's okay. Instead of rocking caps and gowns today I can see all of you graduating today in custom TSOA T-shirts. On the back is printed, 'Rejection - it isn't personal'. And on the front - your motto, your mantra, your battle cry, 'Next!' You didn't get that part, that's my point, 'Next', you'll get the next one, or the next one after that. You didn't get that waiter's job at the White Oak tavern, next! You'll get the next one, or you'll get the next gig tending bar at Joseph's. You didn't get into Juilliard? Next! You'll get into Yale or TISCH. You guys like that joke, so it's okay.

No, of course choosing TISCH is like choosing the arts. It isn't your first choice, it's your only choice. I didn't attend TISCH or for that matter any college, or my senior year of high school, or most of my junior year ... still I've felt like part of the TISCH community for a long time. I grew up in the same neighbourhood as TISCH. I've worked for a lot of people who have attended TISCH, including Marty Scorsese, Class of '64. As you learn your craft together you come to trust each other and depend on each other. This encourages taking creative risks, because you all have the sense that you're in it together. It's no surprise that we often work with the same people over and over. I did eight pictures with Marty, and plan to do more. He did about twenty-five with his editor, Thelma Schoonmaker, whom he met at TISCH when she worked on his student film in the summer of '63. Other directors - Cassavetes, Fellini, Hitchcock, came back to the same collaborators over and over, almost like a repertoire company. And now David O. Russell and Wes Anderson are continuing that tradition.

Treasure the associations and friendships and working relationships with the people in your classes in your early work. You never know what might come from them. There could be a major creative shift or a small detail that could make a major impression. In Taxi Driver, Marty and I wanted Travis Bickle to cut his hair into a mohawk. An important character detail, but I couldn't do it because I needed long hair for The Last Tycoon that was starting right after Taxi Driver, and we knew a false Mohawk would look, well,

false. So, we were kicking it around one day at lunch and we decided to give it one shot with the very best makeup artist at the time, Dick Smith. If you saw the movie, you'll know that it worked. And by the way, now you know it wasn't real.

Friendships, good working relationships, collaboration, you just never know what's going to happen when you get together with your creative friends. Marty Scorsese was here last year to speak to your 2014 graduates. And now here I am, here we are, on Friday, at a kind of super-sized version of one of Alison's student lounge hangout sessions. You're here to pause and celebrate your accomplishments so far, as you move on to a rich and challenging future. And me - I'm here to hand out my pictures and resumes to the directing and producing graduates.

I'm excited and honoured to be in a room of young creatives who make me hopeful about the future of the performing and media arts and I know you're going to make it, all of you. Break a leg!

Next!

Thank you.

Download our FREE eBooks: <https://www.englishspeecheschannel.com/free-english-ebooks>

