

There lies tremendous power in our spoken words. Good evening ladies and gentlemen and a special welcome to my matrics.

The word “*goodbye*” holds a lot of emotion because it expresses a feeling of sadness – especially for those who stay behind. Yet, it is also exciting as it leads to new beginnings for you who are leaving us. Tonight is no different, because it is my time to say goodbye and your time to move on. Each and every one of you is now the product of your school career.

It was my privilege as your Grade Tutor for the last three and a half years, to travel with you through your school journey. You have taught me that the number of years were irrelevant – it was the quality of years that I have spent with you that counts. As part of the Fourways High family you have experienced difficult times and heartache. Many would have buckled under these circumstances, yet you as a group held your character and sense of spirit as a shield during hardship and times of loss. This left a lasting impression on me.

Thank you for your endless contributions and dedication. You have played an important role to enhance our school motto, therefore you are leaving a legacy behind. One thing is for certain: Fourways High School would never have been this strong if it wasn't for your inspiring enthusiasm and loyalty.

My sincere thank you to Natalie, Kevin, Callen, Bradley and the councillors for your outstanding leadership. You set a wonderful example by always standing proud and lending a hand to your teachers and your friends.

As your Tutor, I have many special wishes for each and every one of you on your new journey through life. I don't necessarily wish for you to be wealthy or to never experience pain, but that you would rather have the strength of character and bravery to challenge and conquer all the negative things that you will encounter on your journey.

It is not important to have the best careers in the world. What is important to me is that you all have the wisdom and insight to lead successful lives.

My wish is that you will know what happiness truly means and that you only experience enough pain to keep you human.

I wish you gentleness and that you will also treat others with respect and dignity. I wish you lots of humour and that you will be able to pick yourself up after disappointment. But above all, I wish you LIFE.

Grade 12's, watch your thoughts, they become words. Watch your words, they become actions. Remember that habits become character and that character becomes your destiny.

I would like to leave you with these parting words from one of my favourite poets, Cecil-Day Lewis: “God alone perfectly shows, how selfhood begins with a walking away, and love is proved in the letting go.” GOOD BYE.