

March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018

### Commencement Speech

Faculty, parents, friends, and dignified guests, it's an honor for me to be standing here on behalf of the graduating students of the 2017- 18 class.

The great Carl Jung (1954) once said that “to be normal is the ultimate aim of the unsuccessful” and I can't help but to agree with him!

Today we graduate with a master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and Professional Clinical Counseling. As I recall the time spent with my colleagues, I often wondered: who are these people who choose to learn about the intricacies of the human mind and the unconscious, and then decide to make a career out of it?

Perhaps those who are not normal at all! Those who are not willing to accept the difficulties of life without questioning human suffering. Those who know that mental disorders hide a secret into the human experiences. Those who believe that they can make a difference in the world by helping others get by a little easier; at least these were my driving forces when I joined Brandman's Psychology program.

The last few years have gone by fast, and in the midst of the beginning of new opportunities, I'm filled with passion for my new role in this “crazy” new world we live in! It feels to me that this is new world because we don't think the same, we don't act the same, we bravely take risks, and we honor the consequences. Brandman held me responsible for my own learning pathway while providing me with a structure that kept me safe so that I could take these risks.

I encountered incredible people throughout my journey: professors, advisors, colleagues, but most of all, I found myself. The following phrase comes to me as I reflect on my endless search for answers: some think they are seeking their own soul's truth but, the greater Soul is thinking and seeking through them. (Hellinger, 2009)

I believe that you are all beautiful dear ones! Your darkness is what makes you whole; your heart's desires is what makes you grow; your soul is the core to human experiences, and your love... oh your love, that seems to be the only thing that matters after all.

May we be filled with love for ourselves so that we can recognize the love on others. May we treat our clients with the respect and dignity that they deserve. May we trust that we are

perfect when we stand in our own and unique place; a place that could have an impact on others in such a deep manner that their lives may be transformed forever. We are strong in love, we are resilient when we fulfill our destiny, we heal when we give to others the most precious thing that we have – ourselves.

I meet my past experiences with the outmost respect for the impact that it had in my upbringing. I greet what is new with serenity and confidence that I'm being guided into a place of unimaginable sense of fulfillment and connection with others but mostly, a connection with myself.

As we strive to navigate this historical time for our country, it is my deepest wish that we never forget that “If our religion is based on salvation, our chief emotions will be fear. If our religion is based on wonder, our chief emotion will be gratitude” (Jung, 1989).

On behalf my of fellow graduates, thank you! Thank you to our parents who gave us life, thank you to our partners who have done their best as they watched us “loose our minds,” thank you Brandman University for a brilliant platform, and to every single one who was part of our journeys, thank you!

**Reference:**

Jung, C. G., Read, H., & Full, F. (1954). *The Practice of Psychotherapy*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Jung, C. G. (1989), *Psychology and Religion: West and East*. Princeton University Press.

Hellinger, B. (2009). *O Amor do Espirito na Hellinger Sciencia* (1st ed.). Patos de Minas, MG, Brazil: Atman.