

The Next Stage

Photograph helps us to save our memory, emotion and thoughts from the past. I Love to look back on my own photographs. It reminds me how I grew up, the hard time I had in school and encourage me to go through each stage of my life. The photograph of my graduation moment in pre-school reminds me of the confusion and anger I had before.

Graduation was an unfamiliar word in my mind when I was young. Graduation to me was like UFO. I do not know what graduation really is and what it really means. The picture show how confused I was. I was holding a diploma like a stick. My face was not smiling and I just stood there because the teachers told me to. I can still remember the pre-school time I had. School in China was different from the United State. Teachers push a lot of works on the students. I had such a hard time in the class. I did not ever go kindergarten because I was not living in the city when I was young. In the class, my classmate were already on the times table, but I was still having trouble with the addition. The teacher put me sit away from other people. The works I got was different from others. Being the last one in the class is embarrassing. It makes me even shy to ask for help. One more thing that I clearly remember is my pre-school teacher was recommending my parent send me to physical education major school. I was very upset when I heard it. Am I dumber than others so I better go to physical education school? Since that time I hated school and the confusion I had to endure.

There is an old phrase from China: “how you act at age three determine what you will be at age eighty.” Even though the phrase was a little exaggerated, but I felt was pretty true. From the pre-school experience, I hated school until seventh grade. On the end of the second semester in eighth grade, I finally found myself actually good in poetry and philosophy. I was inspired and encouraged by my Chinese teacher in eight grades, Ms. Jiang. The story begins with I usually

stay a very long time after school end because my parent pick me up after seven o'clock. I was not a student who received high grades. I was really lazy in that time I remember. I did rather sleep than doing my homework. Ms. Jiang was the one was so compassionate and she usually chats with me. She sometimes helps me on my homework, but most importantly she teaches me many value such as do not escape problems. When problems occur, the best way is to face it and try solving it immediately. She also teaches me how I control my emotion, and some strategy of dealing with people. Day after days, I start to have interest about poetry and philosophy. My school grade got improved a lot from middle low in the class to middle high in the class. I knew my grade improved was not just because Ms. Jiang helps me on my homework; mainly, it was Ms. Jiang helps me gained the confidence of studying. From the photograph I can understand why we need to hold the diploma in graduation, I realized I could do the same work as others, and even better.

I'm half way though college right now, and I know I need to work much harder to transfer and graduate. My parent was really hoping I can transfer to a good University. For an immigrant student this is really not an easy step. I came to the United State in tenth grade. Having School in a different country was not easy as I thought. I have to learn a new language, make new friends, follow new rules and live in a new environment. I remember the first year in the United State was full of confusion. I do not know where to find my classroom in school, and I was afraid to ask due to lack of confidence on my poor English. The teacher's lecture to me was like listening music. Classmate ask me question but I don't know how to response them. Sometime I feel confuse and lost that why I need to be here. School in United State was worse than the time in China. But when I think of the memory I had with Ms. Jiang, She teaches me do not afraid and ignore the problems. I gain much more confidence to face my language problem

and try not afraid to deal with peoples in school. Now, I was in the second year of college, this year was time for me to work hard and able to make enough credit for me to transfer. I was taking fifteen units as a full time student in this semester. Looking back and forth at the photo, I wore the cap and gown, and I notice the tassel on my cap was on the right side. Did I really graduate? I was confused sometimes, but that does not mean much to me. What it matter to me now is could I graduate from college to fulfill me and my parent's dream.

The photograph preserves my memory of being confused and angry, but also it made me realized that the hard times I had in school. The hard time memory was not scaring me out but encourages me on my education path. And now, this picture brings me was not the memory; it was the confidence to step up to my college graduation.*