

Pacific Northwest Collegiate Leadership Conference 2019

Justin Jones-Fosu Keynote

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: (SINGING) This hit, that ice cold, Michelle Pfeiffer, that white gold.

(TALKING) Oh, I came to have fun this Monday. Put your hands together like this.

Oh, we about to get lit. All right, all right, so what I want to do is when I point the mic in your direction, and y'all joining with me. Y'all ready?

(SINGING) I got Chuck's on, [INAUDIBLE]. (TALKING) We going to start off with this side.

(SINGING) Come on, come on, I'm too hot.

AUDIENCE: Hot damn!

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: (TALKING) That was kind of weak. All right, all right, this side. Come on, I'm too hot.

AUDIENCE: Hot damn!

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: OK, this side. All right, middle section, come on. (SINGING) I'm too hot.

AUDIENCE: Hot damn!

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: No, no, all right-- everybody, come on. I'm too hot.

AUDIENCE: Hot damn!

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: I said, girl, go on break it down. Girl, [INAUDIBLE] Hallelujah! We'll stop there, all right. Everybody can't wait to get to the woo part, like woo!

So let's start this thing off right. I want you to turn to the person next to you and say neighbor.

AUDIENCE: Neighbor.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Say you look good this morning.

AUDIENCE: You look good this morning.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: That's good. But not as good as me.

[LAUGHTER]

The sad part is that some of y'all really meant that. You looked at the person, yeah, definitely look as good as me, right? Now let me ask you, by a show of hands, how many people have

ever been through a boring presentation? Right, so as we think about boring, a couple of things come to mind, right, that might even lead to a little bit of this, right?

But I want to challenge the notion of what a presentation is supposed to look like, all right? Because there's generally two different types of speakers. There's one type of speaker that's like super high energy. And they're like, woo, woo. And the whole audience is like, oh my gosh, this is going to be the best thing I've ever been to.

But then we go back to our organizations. We go back to our rooms. We go back to our communities.

And we realize we learned absolutely nothing. All we did is we came back, we knew how to nay-nay. We're like hoo-ahh!

[LAUGHTER]

Hoo-ahh!, yah! But if you just go to a speaker to learn how to nay-nay, there is a problem, right? But on the other hand, there's another type of speaker, one that has some amazing content. But they read every single word off the PowerPoint. Like, T stands for try to be a good leader. Y, because you're a good leader.

And after five minutes, we've already checked out. What I want to do is I want to give you the balance of both. I want to give you some amazing energy, but also some practical resource based content that you can be able to use as soon as you leave. So let's dive into this. Now can you all give my introducer a big round of applause for the great job [INAUDIBLE].

[APPLAUSE]

Now a lot can be said, y'all. I have the awesome privilege of traveling across the country, speaking about 60 to 70 times a year for corporations like Mercedes Benz, Toyota, John Deere, National Institute of Health, to amazing universities like this, and even fifth graders in North Carolina. And I just love, love what I do.

But outside of all the accolades, the awards, all that stuff, that means nothing compared to this. This is my bae. She is so fine.

And we've been married now for 13 years. And if I could be transparent with y'all, we are some goofy people. Any other goofy ones in the room?

OK, the honest ones all right. We're so goofy, y'all, that sometimes we wake up in the morning. We just start dancing with each other, just dancing. And one morning our dancing led to this.

And yeah, we had an amazing time, I'm telling you, taking this picture. I don't know where your brains are. But [INAUDIBLE] But this is our princess Lydia, a younger picture of our princess. This is a more recent picture of our hashtag fierce little lady.

And well, we decided to dance again and out came this little guy. And it's a younger picture of him. A more recent picture is here.

And his name is Justin Peter Kofi Uribe Jones Fosu II. Yeah, I agree. He's going to have an amazing time in kindergarten, right?

And the reason I share this with you is yes, you should know a little bit about every presenter who comes before you. But I want to give you information that's not just going to transform how you engage in terms of leadership, how you bring leadership to your everyday existence in life, but how do you actually live this stuff out in your personal lives? Because whether we think about it or not, our personal lives impact our academic lives. And our academic lives impact our personal lives.

And so I don't want to just speak to you as here's how you can be a great leader. I want to just talk about how do you be a good person. And how do you utilize and leverage your why as part of that?

Now, let's dive in. Now before I dive into some of this, I have to handle something pretty important. Now, have any of you all seen any of the Old Spice commercials? You seen some of them.

OK, this is one back in the day where the guy was like, look at your man, now back to me, now back at your man, now back to me. He had diamonds and he ended with, I'm on a horse. Now whether it was that commercial, or any of the other commercials, in those commercials, what did the guy possess? What did he possess?

Charisma, that's good. What else? Yes, Old Spice.

Somebody's like abs. He had abs. But another C word.

AUDIENCE: Confidence.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Confidence, yeah. And when you take confidence too far, what is that?

AUDIENCE: Kanye West.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Yeah, Kanye West. And so one of the interesting things-- I wish I was joking. But in our brief moments together, I want us to have what I call a confident humility. Confident humility. That means we're confident in the experiences that have shaped who we are, but we're humble enough to say that I can learn something more.

And for me, this foundational question began about eight or nine years ago when I asked myself this question I simply ask you as well. And that question is, what is your why?

I mean, if you all at this moment got real deep on me, like ooh, what is the meaning of life? And yes, our why has big implications. There's a macro aspect and a micro component.

The macro-- if I could give a synonym, I'd call it purpose, motivation, what drives you to do what you do, what's the big intent behind your life, right. That's a big question. But let's simplify that even to micro of why do you want to step into leadership?

Or why do you want to continue on your journey of leadership? So what I want you to do just for a quick moment with the person next to you, I want you to discuss your micro why in terms of why you're either currently in leadership or why you desire to be in leadership? All right, on your mark, get set, go, go, go, go, go, go.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: 10 seconds. 10 seconds. 3, 2, 1, everybody clap your hands.

[CLAPPING]

Can you go down low? All right, stop it. If you ever do any type of facilitation, I promise you, if you utter those magic words, people come right back. It doesn't matter what they're talking about. Like I was thinking about the snow last weekend. They'll come right back, I promise.

Now, thank you by the way for that. Now what's interesting to me is I'd love to hear some of your micro why's. What are some of the things that either why you're currently leadership or two, why you desire to learn more or go into leadership? What are some of your micro why's?

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: You want to fix problems. That's good. What else?

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Have a good leader. So you want to become one. That's good. What else? What are your micro why's.

AUDIENCE: Resume building.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Resume building. That's good.

AUDIENCE: Personal growth. To meet funny people.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Personal growth. Meet funny people.

AUDIENCE: Inspire.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Inspire.

AUDIENCE: Influence people.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Say that again?

AUDIENCE: Influence people.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Influence people. That's good. Now, I could bring the mic to every single one of you. And even if you said the exact same thing, couldn't you mean it in a different way?

Because what we realize in our research is that our why's are nuanced. What magnifies what we do is nuance. From a foundational perspective, that when you know your why and you're connected to it in an intrinsically motivating way, it means you don't need the applause of man or woman, that you're just there and you love what you do, that people that have that connection to their why are more readily able to overcome more obstacles than those who aren't, have a deeper sense of resilience and grit. And so when you know your why, it actually impacts what you do.

When you know why and what you do, it impacts, well, when you do. And all of the above ultimately impact how you do. So let me tell you a story for me when I first came into this understanding.

Now, I was just a little kid. I grew up in Grand Forks, Michigan. And we grew up poor-- single mom, two rambunctious little boys.

And my mom would go to Salvation Army to get our clothes before it became cool. And I remember she would go and get a little sweater vest and bow ties [INAUDIBLE] trying to create a Boys to Men group. But one of the interesting things from my mom is that I was this little kid from kindergarten to eighth grade, like, hey, how you doing? I'm just Justin.

I mean, horrible voice to have growing up in the hood. But that's a different story. And I remember, I was just doing well.

I mean, just my mom challenged us academically. So even over the summer, we had to do book reports. I mean, we had-- we got into events because we volunteered. And I remember I was just doing well.

Kindergarten through eighth grade, had a 3.8 GPA. Always one teacher gave me a B plus. Their fault.

And I remember that I transitioned. I went from eighth grade, 3.8 GPA, to ninth grade, 1.9 GPA. And her name was Shaniqua. You see y'all, I loved Shaniqua.

She was intelligent. She was gorgeous. She had it all together.

But I started skipping school for Shaniqua like I love you, boo. I love you. And I started hanging out with different friends.

So I went from, hey, how you doing? I'm Justin to yo, what's up, son, yeah, what's up? And that's just not who I was. Now I know what some of you are thinking in this room. You're like, that sounds really good for the presentation, Justin. But that didn't happen in real life.

I'm glad you challenged me. Kindergarten through eighth grade. Ninth grade.

In West Philadelphia born and raised, on the playground is where I spend most of my days, right? Hashtag Fresh Prince. Now the interesting thing is that you can see the difference, can't you? You can tell when things transitioned.

Now my mom made sure my grades improved. I won't tell you how that happened. But she did.

And right around the 11th grade year over winter break, I remember a question came over me that I didn't even recognize because I was still acting like somebody who I wasn't. And this simple question was this, it was like, Justin, why are you spending so much of your time trying to impress people that can't even give you scholarship money?

I was like, Justin, why are you spending so much of your time trying to impress people that can't even give you a summer job or an internship? And it hit me, y'all, that I was spending my why in all the wrong places. So I remember coming back first day after 11th grade winter break, suit, shirt, tie, briefcase on a public bus to public school.

And my friends would get on the bus, like, did somebody die [INAUDIBLE]. But I didn't care because my why began to shape what I began to do. And I remember going off to college first day as an undergraduate new student, stepped foot on campus for the first time, new suit, new shirt, new tie, skinny, the tie, not me.

And I remember these two young ladies walked up to me and said, excuse me professor, do you mind sharing [INAUDIBLE] class is? I said, well, no I don't. Class is that way.

Now, super corny. They never talked to me again. But that's not the point of the story.

The point of the story is that my why began to shape what I began to do. I remember doing things that I didn't do in high school. I got engaged in organizations, joined fraternity, got involved, was a desk attendant, got involved as a tour guide, all these things, and joined [INAUDIBLE] and all these things, still I graduated with a 3.6, but all these things.

But because my why began to shape me, I started sitting in the front row in class. I started engaging and just learning more. And this is my thing is when you know your why, it's able to help you overcome more obstacles than others.

One of our challenge is is that we simply follow the herd, right? Now sometimes-- actually I want to do this real quick. I want everybody to stand up real quick. Everybody stand up.

All right, let's illustrate what this looks like. All right, now what I want you to do as fast as you can, I want you to walk around this whole small section of chairs, get back to your seat. On your mark, get set, go, go, go, go.

[BEAT BOXING]

[MUSIC - UNK, "WALK IT OUT"]

(RAPPING) Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Now walk it out.

Now walk it out. Now walk it out. West side walk it out. South side walk it out. [INAUDIBLE] walk it out.

Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Now West side [INAUDIBLE] Soutside walk it out.

[BEAT BOXING]

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Y'all not walking it out. All right, let's try it again.

[LAUGHS]

Aye!

[MUSIC - UNK, "WALK IT OUT"]

(RAPPING) Now walk it out.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Westside walk it out. Westside walk it out.

[BEAT BOXING]

(RAPPING) Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Now walk it out. Now walk it out.

Now Westside walk it out. [INAUDIBLE] southside walk it out.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Now hit the dance floor.

(RAPPING) [INAUDIBLE] She do it with no hands. Now, stop, drop, and roll. I'm smoking bubble ho. Yeah, they in trouble ho.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: 20, 19, 18, 17, 16, 15, 14, 13, 12, 11, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, a half, one quarter, 1/8th, 1/16th, 130 seconds, [INAUDIBLE].

[LAUGHTER]

128th, [INAUDIBLE]. Please don't make me do more math. All right, don't mess with me [INAUDIBLE] percentile. Now what in the world just happened?

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: [INAUDIBLE] some of you are like I did more exercise than I did all week. Thanks, Justin, all right. And it's interesting to me because when I do this exercise, it's really phenomenal to watch people do this. Because there's generally three different types of people.

So let me show you the three different types of people when I do this exercise. All right, first group of people, I want everybody to stand up. Man, this guy is making us do something.

It's too early in the morning to do anything. You better calm down, man. All right, I want you to walk around the whole section of chairs and get back to your seat as fast as you can.

I saw, y'all. I saw y'all. All right, next group of people. All right, I want everybody to stand up.

Woo-hoo, we get to do something. Yes, we get to do something. All right, I want you to walk around the whole section of chairs, get back to your seat as fast as you can. All right, [INAUDIBLE] way too many people coming that way.

And the last group, sometimes it's the short cut people that they take one row and then somehow the one row became the whole section. I saw some of you, too. Now it's interesting because if you watch from my vantage point, you'd have noticed something interesting and intriguing. That depending on which side that you came out on, about 85% to 90% of you begin going the exact same way.

It was powerful to watch. Some of you go one way and start to go one way, like, oh, excuse me. I don't want to run to your biceps and begin going a whole different way. And this is actually a research theory called the Herd theory. But before I get to the research, let me break it down in practical terms I think we can sometimes get.

It's almost like this. Have you ever been to an event, and you saw people running, but you had no idea why they were running? You're like aye, why y'all running? Why y'all running, right? And you had no-- it could've been the track team from down the road. Like, we're just out for a run.

You're like, but why y'all running with masks on? But this interesting thing is that this research theory, what it did is it looked at a group of creatures. And when this group of creatures thought that impending danger was coming, that they all began going the exact same way.

The challenge is that sometimes that way was off of a cliff. So my question for you as it relates to your specific why, is where is you're herd leading you? Even as it relates to leadership and how we unify to lead, where is your herd leading you?

Is it all about just what you want accomplish? What you want to build for yourself? Or how do we come together to have the most powerful, magnified impact?

That's the instant-- that's the beauty of the challenging the herd, right? Think about it this way. Every single one of us in this room, we're different, aren't we? We're all different.

Some of us have lone hair. Some of us have short hair. Some of us who are hair follically challenged, we swoop our ears back and forth. (SINGING) I whip my ears back-- right? Some of us, when we walk to class, we walk real fast like, got to get to class, got to get to class.

And some of us when we walk to class, we walk real slow like, aye, aye. I don't know how long it's going to take you to get to class, right? I mean, some of us have beautiful smiles like Colgate should be calling. And well, some of us have amazingly, unique, distinct, peculiar laughs.

And those are people just trying not to laugh. They're like-- oh, wait a minute, I can not let them hear the laugh. You know the kind of laugh when you could be at a movie theater, it is pitch black. You can't see a thing. You hear the person laugh and you like, Susan, Susan, I hear you laughing, Susan.

You like the movie? I mean, that kind of laugh. But what we found in our research is that right around the end of elementary school transitioning to middle school, following us to high school, joining us to college, and many people in the professional ranks, as we meet people and have different types of experiences, this is what normally begins to happen. People become copies.

They start acting the same, dressing the same, twiddling their hair the same. And if they don't have hair, the ear the same. And I remember this one guy came up to me at the end of one of my presentations just super excited. He was like, Justin, your presentation, it changed my life.

He was like, Justin, I want to be just like you. I mean, how do you respond to that? So I tried to respond in the most humble way I could. I was like, thank you. But honestly, I don't think you'd be that sexy.

And then one of the things is that-- I'm just joking. But you didn't have to laugh that hard over here. She's like huh, you sexy? You're right. Thanks.

Well, on my way home, I began processing and asking the question, how do I respond to this? And it came with a simple mantra that I'll give to you today. Don't be just like anyone.

Be better for everyone by being the only you. Don't be just like anyone. Be better for everyone by being the only you. What does that practically mean?

That means your unique skill sets, gift sets, the way that you approach leadership, your successes, your failures, your age, all the things that are leveraged that you can use for your benefit. Now, if you're trying to be someone else, you're robbing yourself and your communities, which you choose to serve and lead of your unique opportunities and perspective.

That's part of the reason we need to unify to lead because all of us are engaged and see it in a different way. And in our power of unifying, it allows us to accomplish and achieve more. But I know what some of your thinking.

You're, like, but, Justin, I mean, shouldn't we be like some people? And I'd say yes. Let me give you some examples.

If you're the kind of person who always gets to class late, you should be like the people that get to class on time. Or, let's make it personal, OK. If you're the kind of person that finds yourselves in one committed relationship and then somehow at the same time in another committed relationship, you should be like the people that find themselves in one committed relationship at a time, at a time. No point, no pointing.

But there's others of you who are like, Justin, I get that. I march to my own beat. I'm different. I'm different.

I show up to my class [INAUDIBLE]. You may be the kind of person where if you show up to class 15 minutes late, and the professor really cares, they call you up and [INAUDIBLE] and they say, excuse me, excuse me, can you tell me why you're 15 minutes late? And you say to that professor, well, professor, I heard this crazy bald head speaker.

And he told me, don't be just like anyone. Be better for everyone by being the only you. And the only me is late. So no, I don't want you to get kicked out of class, right? We need your GPA.

But what I am saying is take on the positive qualities of others while not being just like them. And how does that translate into our why? Because when you know your why, and you have a high why, you realize that it's unique to you. And it's your perspective, the way that you're able to approach the world, society, and even your campuses.

But there's three things every single one of us needs in order to have a high why. We need to have a clarity of that why, a connection to that why, and a consistency with that why versus clarity.

Your why should be so clear to you. But why you-- what you want accomplish, what you hope to do in terms of leading, why you're even in your school, well, it should be that clear. Again, if you don't have that clarity yet, it's OK because we'll talk through some things especially at the end how to get there.

But it should be so clear that if I stopped and asked you in a hallway, what's your why, why are you here, you'll be able to tell me without a shadow of a doubt. Justin, this is exactly why I'm here. 30 seconds or less, almost like an elevator pitch. This is why I'm here. This is what I want to accomplish.

OK, let me put it this way. If I stopped and asked you what your birthday was, you wouldn't be like, well, um, I'm not sure. Because you know your birthday, right? Some of y'all don't even have birthdays anymore. You have birthday weekends.

Some people have graduated to birthday months. I met some people who was like, the whole year is my birthday. I'm like how-- OK, but like, when you-- you would know your birthday because we rehearsed it over and over and over again. And that's the same thing we need for our why.

It's that coming together and saying, this is why I'm here, clarity. Second, we should have a connection to it. Y'all, your why should do something to you. Your why should make you laugh.

It should make you smile. It should give you goose bumps. It should make you cry if you weren't able to accomplish it.

Your why should do something to you. If it does nothing to you, then one of two things have happened. Either one, you never had an intrinsically valued why in the first place. That meant that it meant something to you even beyond building your resume.

But two, you lost the original zest of your why. And y'all, if we're open in this room today, doesn't life sometimes just drain the why out of you? And that, my friends, is why we need number three, and that's consistency. Is what I call the why stories or why symbols.

It's the things that help you remember exactly what you hope to accomplish, what you want to do, that person that you helped, that student, that cause that you brought to your campus. Whatever that thing is, that's the thing that helped you to do something powerfully. But you have to keep reminding yourself of exactly why you're here.

I mean, what people don't realize that I do often is before I speak, I start going back over the times I've spoken, not when people stand up and clap and all that stuff because yeah, that's nice. But that don't have lasting impact. What has lasting impact is the emails I received six months later that said, Justin, what you shared, I'm able to still utilize and do. And that, my friends, is what I'm going over even as I'm playing music, just going back over those stories. So I

show up and give you my best. Because I want to reconnect to why I'm doing this in the first place.

For some of you, in your meetings, for those who lead meetings, that's reminding everybody in your meetings of hey, this is why we do it and giving examples of stories of how what you're doing in your organization is actually helping the campus or your cause. That's our why. But we have to see it in two ways, both short and long term.

And so I ask this of you, I call it the one year test. One year from today, what do you look like? Now some of y'all got real physical on me real quick, like bigger biceps, hair. No, that's not going to happen.

Like Bruno Mars, love you just the way you are. My question for you is, what new initiatives have you begun on campus? What new projects-- what new organizations have you started? How have you challenged the way that your organization that your part of or that you plan to be a part of exists?

What impact are you having? How many members do you have next year? What's changed in the course of your campus? How have you become a better friend, partner?

What are your grades next year? Some of you are like, I'm graduating [INAUDIBLE]. What do you hope to do from a career perspective?

What new mentors have you gained? Who are some of the people you've surrounded yourself with? And this is even some of the most powerful things.

Who have been some of the people you've had to let go? These are all powerful questions we should ask ourselves as we think about the short term, zero to one year. But ultimately, how does it fit into what you hope to accomplish in the long term, not only for your life, but also in the lives of your specific campuses and the things that you hope to accomplish.

It's not just about this. What I find often is that most people choose not to engage because of this wonderful world, a word, excuse me, called meaning. And I'm on a mission, y'all, to challenge how we see meaning. That it's not about finding meaning in what we do. It's about bringing meaning to what we do.

Many of us, we've heard this. Have you ever heard somebody tell you to find your passion? Yeah, and we hear it all the time. And I think that's great and awesome.

But you know what's not being told to us often is how do you live passionately where you currently are even when you haven't found your magical unicorn? And that's the beauty of showing up and coming-- let me put it this way-- coming to a place where you understand how I can be passionate even in the most challenging situations. Let alone give you a quick story about that.

Now, I went off to school. And I was a business major, specifically marketing. Now, have you ever had a class that you didn't think you needed?

Yeah, so mine was biology. Sorry for all my bio people. My brother just finished Med school as a resident.

So I love y'all. But I didn't think I needed biology. And I remember like, why am I doing biology? I'm a marketing major. I do business.

But I decided to still show up and to be on 10 and to bring meaning with me. Showed up in my suit, sat in the front row. And I remember I still have my briefcase.

And it was that professor that actually recommended me for a little known internship called Coca-Cola where I was paid \$10,000 every summer, paid to live in Buckhead, Atlanta, lived in a hotel for eight weeks, and worked on a Coca-Cola classic brand marketing team.

It's because I still showed up even in that place on 10 and engaged. I brought meaning. I wasn't just like, well, I don't think I need this class. I'm going to sit in the back. And I'm not going to really care.

Because my professor saw me showing up and bringing meaning with me, he was willing to recommend me. So my question for all of us is, what opportunities and things that we're losing out on because we're simply just trying to find meaning in what we're doing instead of bringing it with us, being passionate where you currently are? Because I promise you my professor would have never said anything. He went at the end of the year, like, Justin, if you just sat in the front row and been really engaged, I would have recommended for that [INAUDIBLE]-- he wouldn't have done that?

Where are we losing out on opportunities because of that? But it's not just about our why and why we want to lead. It's also about our now. And if I didn't give now a synonym, I call it passion. So everybody repeat after me. Say passion.

AUDIENCE: Passion.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Look [INAUDIBLE] pop that p with it like, passion.

AUDIENCE: Passion.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Passion, yes. Because when you have passion, you give it your all. Let me give you-- describe it in a different way. It's almost like this. There's two different types of passion.

There's one type of passion where it's what you do, right. And I tell people all the time, I would do this for free. But my wife won't let me.

I mean, I love, love what I do. I'm passionate. But the kind of passion I'm talking about is not what you do. It's how you do it.

It's the effort, the intensity with what you give something. It's what I call being on 10, right? Because when you're on 10, you give it your all. Let me give you an example.

Have you ever been to a place where people have been dancing? Aren't there usually two different types of dancers? Some are like, yes, because I'm the watcher.

There is one type of dancer when the music comes on, it's like [BEAT BOXING] aye, they're not going to see me sweat, yah, right? And there's another type of dancer when the music comes on, it's like, woo, woo, woo.

[LAUGHTER]

This dancer over here, they're so concerned about people watching them, looking at them, putting them on Snap. They even remixing like, [BEAT BOXING] remix too fast. They're not going to see me sweat, yuh, right?

And this other person over here, they brought like three undershirts because they knew they going to sweat out every one. I mean, they came ready to give everything they had on the dance floor of their lives. And my question for you is, which type of dancer are you? Not in real life because we don't need to know that.

But are you this type of dancer over here that's so busy, concerned, and consumed about people watching you that you don't give your best effort, that you're not maximizing opportunities in your organizations, your causes, and making a difference on your campus? Or, are you the person over here that's like I'm going to give everything I have in the course of my journey here so I can maximize the impact?

See, let me explain it to you in a different way. Now, I remember coming home one day. And my daughter came up to me.

I was coming home from off of a speaking trip. And she came up to me like, daddy, daddy, it's so good to see you. And she was like, daddy, there's going to be a daddy-daughter dance at school. She's like do you want to go to the daddy-daughter dance with me?

I'm like, yeah, I'm a cool dad. I rock my bow-tie. We do what we do, right?

But she was like, daddy, it's not just going to be a daddy-daughter dance. This is actually going to be a daddy-daughter dance competition. She was like, you want to compete with me? I'm like, OK, competition is different than a daddy-daughter dance. But this was my response to my daughter's request for the daddy-daughter dance competition.

[VIDEO PLAYBACK]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

(RAPPING) I don't do the most, but I do a lot. I'm going to make a toast because we still alive. No Big, I feel like Pac. I shoot the shot.

I'm coming in hot. [INAUDIBLE]

I'm coming in hot just like a fajita. I write what I live. My life in the speaker. I'm nice with the flow just like my demeanor.

I'm feeding my fam. Feed up my fam. I'm feeding the meter.

They got the iron while I got the steamer. I bring the fire, but you never seen her. I testify, don't need a subpoena.

They want my soul, got to Korea. I love my dog just like I'm PETA. Gotta protect Him.

I made the call in just like I'm reppin. I know we left but now we're back together. [INAUDIBLE] cause that's A with Lecrae from the A-train to the A. I'm coming in hot.

[END PLAYBACK]

[APPLAUSE]

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Thank you. Now, I know the collective question every one of us has in this room, did he get back up?

[LAUGHTER]

Now, did you love this, right? Like, I showed up on 10 for my daughter. I mean, I came willing to give everything I had.

But before you go and herald me dad of the year, let me share with you there were many other moments where I didn't show up on 10, that I showed up on two. My daughter asked to spend time or play with me, but I was no, no, I'm too busy for you. There were times where I showed up on five, where she was trying to talk to me, but I was busy on Facebook or LinkedIn checking messages and things, where I was half listening to her and not giving her my full, undivided attention.

So before you go herald me dad of the year, let me share with you that I often don't show up in this way. But I was proud of myself in this moment that I showed up on 10. But who else showed up on 10? My daughter, right?

Wasn't she killing it? I was like, how she learn how to do that? Oh yeah, public school.

But I mean, she was killing it, right? I mean, just going for it. When I asked her right after the video, right after this dance part because she had her Beyonce moment where all her friends came up to her like, Lydia, Lydia. She's like, yeah, I know, thank you [INAUDIBLE]. And she was really killing it, right?

And I said, Lydia, what was your favorite part of the dance? And she was like, daddy, when you lifted me up. And she had no idea what she was saying.

She was just talking about the physical component of me lifting her up. But what it meant to me was a symbolic nature that I wanted to continue for the rest of our lives together of lifting her up. And you want to know what my favorite part of the dance was? It was not the splits.

But my favorite part of the dance was practice. It was practice. It was when we were at home late at night, and we were-- kept her up past her bedtime, like, don't tell your mother, right, and we were practicing. And we were going at it. I mean, we were working.

She was like, all right, daddy, I want you to do this. And I'm like, OK, I'm going to do this. And we were really working together to figure out how to do it.

We were unifying to lead, talking about [INAUDIBLE] you take on this part. I'll take on this part. And so we were-- I mean, y'all, we were practicing on 10. We were acting like we were in front of millions of people, even doing the splits in practice, right?

I wasn't just like-- we were going all like [INAUDIBLE] just going for it. But that's my thing.

My question for you is, how are you or are you practicing on 10? How are you practicing on 10 before your big dance or before your big game or before your big meeting, before your big event? What are the things that you're doing on 10 before you get to the place where everybody sees you?

Let me give it to you in a different way because I think sometimes different stories help us to get different things. It's almost like this. If you yourself ever seen somebody get chased by a dog before?

Don't we run differently based on the kind of dog it is? If it's a really, really cute dog, we may run up to it like [INAUDIBLE] you bad and bougie. Yes, you are. If it's a really, really smart dog that can help us to fill out all the paperwork for our event.

But if it's a really, really mean dog-- now, I know what some of you are thinking. You're like, Justin, now is not the time for dog shaming. And I agree.

But if there were four dogs outside today when we got ready to leave, and they were foaming at the mouth and barking like, rah, rah, at that moment, what would you do?

AUDIENCE: Run.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Run, OK. OK, at this moment, do you care about your hair? No. Do you care about your shoes?

You may not care about your friend. Like, I hope you make it, Brian. I hope you make it, right?

Because you're going to be running with everything that you had. But what if getting chased by a dog went wrong? What if instead of running with everything you had, you saw this dog chewing on Brian's leg, like [GROWLING] and all of sudden, it turns its attention to you like err, and starts chasing after you? But instead of running with everything you have, you start running in slow motion like, hey, Lee, hey, Sarah, hey, Rebecca, Rachel-- my mood ah, ah.

Doesn't that look stupid to you? I mean, could you imagine watching from above from the second floor window, looking at this person running in slow motion, and you're like, why are they running in slow motion? This looks hashtag stupid.

I'm still [INAUDIBLE]. I mean, this is what we do, right? And while I hope that there will not be any dogs chasing us as we leave today, but there is a symbolic dog chasing every single one of us. And it's a dog called mediocrity.

It's a dog that said, just be average. It's a dog that says show up, but don't be present. I've seen this over and over again.

I often see this. I don't know if you've seen the same thing. But have you ever been out to eat and you see a family out eating, like a family of four, maybe? And the entire hour long, everybody is on their phone.

I get it. I know there's a five minute grace period where we take a picture of our food, put it on Instagram. But we gotta come back, right?

How are we engaging with each other or showing up not being present. Some of us, that looks like in our classes, or even sometimes organizations, or the things that are going on where we should be present, showing up, on 10, and asking ourselves, how do I get the most out of this? Same way here.

You're going to go to workshops, whatever track that you choose. You should be in the front row on the edge of your seats, asking the questions how do I learn, how do I engage so I could be someone better. So I could be a better leader. So we can figure out how we can come together to actually have maximal impact on the things that matter to us. That's our challenge.

I just can't leave you and say be on 10. Yay, I come from human resources development. I worked for three Fortune 500 companies. And so I have to give you some meat on what this looks like.

So my question for you is, what are your on-10 behaviors? What communicates that you're actually giving your authentic best? What are those things that you do, both academically, but in your organizations and your causes? What does it look like for you to show up on 10?

Now, I realized in my research that some people don't show up on 10 because they suffer from what I call on-10 comparisons where they're comparing constantly their 10 to other people's 10. Now, let's be clear and open. My 10 is different than your 10.

You have to decide and engage what is the best that you can do with the capacity that you have. That's your own 10. It's not that you're always [INAUDIBLE]. That's not on 10.

Some of y'all introverts are like that's not going to be me, right? It may not be that. But what is your specific on-10?

Now, if you had to rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 10, 1 being the lowest, 10 being the highest, rhetorical question, how passionately are you currently living your why of your life right now? Passion [INAUDIBLE] are you leading, not just how you would answer, but how would the three to five closest friends around you if I ask them? What would they say about you in terms of how you go to class and engage?

What would some of the people [INAUDIBLE] in organizations, what would the people in your executive board say about how you're leading, passionately pursuing what you're trying to accomplish? That's what it means to be on 10.

Now, I'm going to give you some research to challenge our cruise control. Because what I've realized is that in order to have a high now, to give our 10, to have [INAUDIBLE] in-10 behaviors, we truly have to challenge our cruise control. Now, did you know that you actually turn into a different person when you press cruise control?

Y'all didn't know that, right? OK, just anecdotally, some of y'all, you start taking off your shoes. Some people start doing Yoga in the seats. I'm like what in the world is happening, right? People start turning up the music like, shake it off, shake it off, woo, woo.

But the research shows, not only drivers, but also pilots, when pilots press autopilot, when drivers press cruise control that they actually shift from an active mindset to a passive one. That one, they're actively engaging and scanning the environment around them. But in the other, they're just simply coasting.

So where in your life might you have just been coasting? Is it in your friendships? Is it in your studies? Is it in your organizations?

For some of us, is it in your families? Where might you simply just been coasting? I want to help you to challenge that cruise control.

I'm not going to go through all four. But I have a think called the principle, the frog, step seat, and smile. And I'm going to give you two of them.

These are four resource based ways to challenge our cruise control and to have a high now. The principle of the frog is simply this. Mark Twain many years ago said if you eat a frog in the morning, everything else will go down easy.

Brian Tracy [INAUDIBLE] wrote a book called Eat That Frog. And the principal of the frog is simply this, that you do the hardest, most challenging daunting thing first. But often when do we do the hardest, most challenging, daunting thing? Last. And sometimes last becomes when? Never, right?

Imagine this, imagine you had a professor that gave you a paper that was due October 29th. When do we start working on it? Some of you are like 12:01 AM October 29th, a whole bunch of coffee and Red Bull. Gives me wings.

But that's what we do. We sometimes put the hardest, most challenging, daunting thing off to the last. But what if we challenged ourselves on a weekly, a daily, or some masterly rhythm where we asked ourselves, what's the hardest, most challenging thing I need to accomplish in an organization, I need to accomplish for class?

And we did that thing first when we have the most effort, the intensity, and ability to engage that thing. And that's what's the principle of the frog is that you do the hardest thing first. Like even when you wake up in the morning, asking-- my wife and I, we joke with each other.

We're like what's your frog today? And for the first 15 or 30 minutes that's what we engage in. But there are three things that are killing our days from a productivity's perspective, three things that research bears out.

Number one, when the first thing that we do is check social media. It's killing our day. Yes, I'm glad you know your neighbor of your phone number. But how's that go beyond what you need to accomplish?

Number neighbors are cool. Kind of creepy, but still cool. For those who don't know what that is, ask somebody around, OK.

The second thing is when you first check email. There's our day. And the third, which was really surprising, but when you check the news.

Now, there was a great Harvard Business Review article that came out about news. And it's just not saying that news is bad itself. But it's saying negative news. And, y'all, most of the news that we hear today is what?

AUDIENCE: Negative.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: And no matter what side that you choose or what program you listen to, it's normally negative. And they actually showed that not only does it impact people's mood in a negative way, but it actually impacts their performance. They saw a correlation between watching negative news [INAUDIBLE] worst performance. These three things are killing your day.

What if you instead, for each day or each week, or each organization, what is the hardest thing that we need to accomplish? And you put it in your schedule and your calendar to be able to do. That's principal of the frog.

Principal smile is what I call a hashtag emo. I know it's not a mixture of champagne and orange juice. But a hashtag [INAUDIBLE] is an acronym for an intentional moment of appreciation.

It's what I call extravagant appreciation where you go out your way to celebrate and thank those around you who have done something significant for you. Oftentimes, we find ourselves in the land of negativity that we forget and fail to really celebrate those around us. So my question in all this is, how will you show extravagant appreciation? One of my soapboxes is those who are normally not appreciated. And sometimes on our college campuses, who are some of those people?

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: [INAUDIBLE] deeper.

AUDIENCE: Janitors. [INAUDIBLE]

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Janitors, custodial staff members, dining services. Sometimes we walk past them without a simple thank you. What would it look like for you in your organizations, for your causes to start a handwritten thank-you-note campaign on behalf of your organization or behalf on a college campus, or whatever, and let them know the value that they have and that they serve.

Let them stop cleaning and see how your campus looks when I go out of my way to try to celebrate and let them know the value that they possess. How are you showing up giving extravagant appreciation? But all of us we see it in different lens.

And what I found in my research is that there are four different types of people based upon our why and now continuum. For a high level summary, there are those who have a high now-- excuse me-- a low now and a low why. These are the wanderers.

They don't know why they're here. And they're not passionately do anything about it. If I had to give them a TV show, I'd call them the Walking Dead.

All right, the next group of people, those have a high sense of why, but a low sense of now. These are the thinkers, who are constantly waiting for the eighth day of the week. They understand why they're doing something, but for whatever reason they're not on 10, not giving their all.

The next group of people, those who have a high now, but a low why, these are the misplaced. These are the people that they're doing a lot of great stuff just in the wrong places. And they might even confuse activity for progress.

Many people who operate in the misplaced quadrant, everybody's like, oh, you're an overachiever. But I've realized something super powerful, that you can overcome even so many areas that you actually could be underachieving because you're just making small dents in things that you're doing, but not necessarily breaking through in a few things. I suffered from that.

I was doing everything on campus until I really had to ask myself, what do I want to leave as a legacy here on campus? And how do I maximize my impact in one area? That's misplaced.

And last but not least are those who have a high now and high why. Those are the pursuers. These are the kind of people that they understand clarity, connection, consistency, and they're on 10. And if I had to give a tip for everyone, the wanderers, they need to connect to a strong, intrinsically valued why.

The thinkers, they need accountability of somebody helping them to do one thing. The misplaced, they need times of reflection where they ask, is what I'm doing according to my why?

And the pursuers, they need to listen. One of the greatest philosophers over the last 100 years just simply told us to sit down, be humble. #KendrickLamar. Because they haven't always spent as much time in the pursuer quadrant as others.

So my bigger question is, how will you fight for all this? What will you do? And one way that we fight is-- what I want you to do is the person next to you, I want you to give them a big hug. Give the person next to you a big hug. I'm serious. Yes, give them a big hug.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: All right, that's enough hugs. Some of you are getting a little too excited about the hug. It's always like one person that gets real excited like yes, thank you, Justin. I've been waiting to give them a hug all semester long.

And have you noticed that there are different types of greetings and hugs that exist? There's a nice little formal, handshake, hello, how are you doing? It's good to see you, right?

There's I'm cool. I'm going to dap you up. Yo, what's up?

How you doing? It's good to see you. There's the-- I'm not sure who still does this-- the hand hug.

Hey, how you doing? It's good to see you. There's the classic, the side hug.

Hey, how you doing? It's good to see you. There's I'm going to hug you, but my body is not going to touch you hug. hey, how you doing? Good to see you.

And then there's that full on frontal hug where you're like [INAUDIBLE]. It's good to see you, right? Now, hopefully you're not running around campus [INAUDIBLE] security will be called. But for those few people that consent to a hug like that, I mean, that's really close.

I mean, think about it, right, even for my huggers-- where are my huggers in the room? People who just love to hug, right? See, when I asked you to give the person next to you a hug, my huggers in the room were like, oh, turn down for what, right?

And there was others of you who looked to the left and to the right of you and said, if you touch me-- hashtag diversity. Now, I don't care who you are. If I ask you to give the person next to you a hug for 90 seconds, I'm not talking about that nice little side hug like, we are a family and we're so much-- I'm talking about that full on frontal hug where you're like [INAUDIBLE] engage.

Many of y'all be like, nope, because when you hug somebody, that's too close. You're can experience all their sexy goodness, right. And as you're hugging them, and you're touching their one ab, and they're touching your one ab, I mean, it's-- my one ab-- it can be hard. That's too close.

So what I'm not asking you to do, I'm not asking you to start a hug-a-thon. That's not what Justin's saying. But I am asking you to embrace the discomfort.

I encourage you to embrace the discomfort even while you're here at this conference. Talk and engage with people you don't know, to go to sessions and learn about things that may challenge you or challenge your perspective. Embrace the discomfort. Imagine you've been on five.

And you've been honest, and you're like, Justin, I want to leave here. I'm going to get all the tools I need to be on 10. But you've been hanging around friends and family members and sometimes other people who've been on five. How do they respond when you say you want to be on 10?

They're like uh, no, this is five. We don't do 10 here. But have you ever heard the saying misery loves what average does too? And that my friends is why your why should be so powerful for you if you're willing to be on 10 even in the face of opposition and challenges.

So my question is, what will you do? What will you do? I'll explain what this means at the end in terms of the closing keynote.

But what will you do? That's the biggest question I have for you. Now, what I want you to do as we get ready to transition and you'll see here some information. I'll put it up at the end again.

But I want everybody to stand up as we get ready to transition real quick. You're not going to walk anywhere. I promise.

Stand up one last time. Some are like, I already got my steps in, Justin. I'm good.

Now, I want you to look around the room real quick. Look around the room. Look at the awkward smiles.

Look at the extroverts ready to pounce and introverts like, no. These people here in this room, I want you to encourage and challenge these people throughout the rest of this conference and even beyond, all right, to be on 10, to engage, to start figuring out practical ways you can unify to lead. And at the end of the day, we have to with the people in this room and those who aren't here, we have to celebrate with them.

So what I want you to do as we get ready to transition, I want you to put your hands together like this, all right. Now I want you to be on 10. Follow hard after me.

Don't care what your neighbor looks like. But we going to give your all, give your 10. Y'all ready?

All right, come on. Come on. Like this, y'all.

Like this, y'all. Like this, y'all. Like this, y'all.

Now, put your right hand in the air. Come on. And put your right hand in the air. Come on.

And to the left, and to the left, your other left, your other left. And put your left hand in the air. Come on.

And put your left hand in the air. Come on. And to the right. And to the right-- that nay-nay-- to the right. And to the right.

And now both hands in the air. Come on. And both hands in the air and scream.

[SCREAMING]

I want you to give your neighbor a high five and say your why matters now.

AUDIENCE: Your why matters now.

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Give your other neighbor a high five and say unified elite.

AUDIENCE: [INAUDIBLE]

JUSTIN JONES-FOSU: Ladies and gentlemen, I'm Justin Jones-Fosu. Thank y'all so much from the beginning. Now can you all give our wonderful host the big round of applause as she gives us our next instructions, all right.

[APPLAUSE]