

"CONGRATULATIONS"

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY PHYLICIA RASHAD AT
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY'S COMMENCEMENT, 2004

Congratulations and Happy Mother's Day.

Time is precious and short so I'll get right to the point. You asked me to come, so I'm here. And I asked myself, "What could I say to this August body that's meaningful, and personal and true?" I want to offer this suggestion to you: The best way to live in this world is with a mother's heart. Yes.

A mother's heart is brave. A mother's heart is keenly intelligent. A mother's heart is resourceful and quick and skilled in action. A mother's heart is flexible. A mother's heart is sustained and empowered by the purity of its intention—its soul intention—to see the family through. Yes. And to encourage each member of the family with its diverse, individual personalities. To embrace the family as a whole with love and respect. Unyielding in this effort, the mother's heart sacrifices its own pleasure for the well-being of the family.

My great wish for all of you is that you would understand that this takes great effort and sustained and renewed commitment, that you would each come to regard this world and all of its inhabitants as your family and that you would embrace it with a mother's heart.

May all of your days be filled with brilliant sunrises and magnificent sunsets, and may you take the time to regard them. And just like the mother's heart, may you live in constant remembrance and gratitude for the one who created you. And may good fortune always attend you in all of your endeavors—and tonight may you throw down and celebrate, celebrate, celebrate!

The world that you want to live in needs you to create it. The world that you want to live in needs you to create it. So live in it, and create it with a mother's heart.

Congratulations.