

To my past from my present: Shiani Rodwell

For a long time I've liked to think of you as two very distinct people. After all, it's very useful to place things in chronological order.

For one, it helps us track progress: seconds become minutes, minutes become hours, days become months and months becomes years. Eventually, our entire life experience can be reduced to a series of digits - our birthday, our first day at school, high school graduation, our first date, receiving our acceptance letter to university. The only difference between you and me is how much time we have under our belt.

Looking back, there are many things I wish you to know; but above all, I wish you to know how to make your time our own; how to live in the moment.

I want you to consider yourself successful in sport purely because you enjoy the thrill of an adrenaline-high, instead of whether you qualify for the final competition. I want you to consider yourself successful in school purely for the sense of satisfaction you get from submitting an assignment on time, instead of whether your marks are high-enough to get you into university.

I want you to forget your future self. This request applies equally to my present, university self as to my younger, high school self and will apply to my future self. There will always be something else to work towards, always another mountain to climb.

Just remember that personal growth is not measured by the number of your life experiences. It's what you get out of your experiences that makes you who you are. So, take time out to read that book. Go for that run. Hang out with your friends a few days before the deadline and don't feel guilty about it.

I suppose I really address this letter to me, one person, my past and my present combined. Have the courage to measure your progress not in the accumulation of numbers, but in the joy of each moment.