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Kia ora koutou katoa

Today I'm going to try and share a little bit of wisdom I've gained while here at St Hilda's. It's about making the most of any and every situation you are put in. This is my take on something you have probably heard before.

Throughout my life, like everyone, I have missed out on a lot of things I would have loved the opportunity to do. We all miss out at times - on making sports teams, cultural groups, missing out on leads, solos, captains' roles or the grades you wanted. But through the upset and initial disappointment an important lesson can be learnt. What defines you is not the things you are given, awarded, or selected for, but what you do with the opportunities you get, or for my last word, how you respond to missing out on them.

Although a long list of things on your CV might look good on paper, looking good on paper is not truly what it's about. A long list of things on your CV you never showed up to or gave any effort to is not something to be proud of. What you want to be proud of is making a positive difference to the people around you, being an active participant, and doing your part in the group.

When you get opportunities, sitting back, relaxing, and doing the bare minimum is not what it's about, you are not only letting the people around you down, you're not doing yourself justice. You shouldn't take these things for granted or think you just 'deserve them'. You should always strive to go above and beyond what is asked of you, especially when you have been given something many other people wanted.

Then there is the missing out. I have learnt that, for personal growth, missing out is often better than just being handed things. When you miss out you are given an opportunity. An opportunity to prove yourself in different ways and to grow as a person. To step up in whatever role or team you are in, becoming the positive influence. For other people in your team or group (particularly those that might be feeling the same way) this can make a huge difference to their experience. It is an opportunity to go out of your comfort zone and challenge yourself in ways you may

not have, had you been given the opportunity. The moments where I have grown the most are when I have missed out on what I wanted, not when I have got it.

Missing out challenges you to create your own opportunities, rather on relying on the ones that have been handed to you. Missing out is never fun, but I don't think it is a negative thing. Challenge yourself to become the best version of yourself, be the positive influence, the leader, find something good in the missing out. It may be that it has given you a chance to find something new that you love. Missing out is an opportunity to show everyone what you are capable of, and that the 'missing out' doesn't define you. This growth, this effort will not go unnoticed. But most of all, when you miss out and still give your all, you are growing as a person hugely. This will do so much more for you in the long run and it will make you a better person.

So remember, you can be a leader without a title, you can be the best teammate without being in the best team, you can be the best cast member without being the lead. Give it your all and stand out for the right reasons. Making the most of everything you're a part of will not only make it much more enjoyable for you but also for everyone around you. All it takes is turning up to that meeting, that rehearsal, that practice, that game, that competition, or that class with a positive attitude. And always ready to give your all no matter what. I encourage you all to use every opportunity you are given to grow, and to use missing out on things to grow even more!