Run to Your Own Paramount

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This session was presented in Cantonese.
May I invite all of you to stand up for some exercise after our big meal. Find a partner next to you and follow what I am doing through this exercise:

**Step 1.** Shake hands and say, “Welcome, you are here!”

**Step 2.** Clap hands and say, “Congratulations, you are here!”

**Step 3.** Clap both hands and say, “To be the best of the best!”

**Little Turtle: The Story of Venus Lo**

In a sports meeting of the animal world, a little turtle enrolled in a marathon, with the peak of a mountain as the end point. The only requirement of this race was to do your best with all your potentials; it was indeed a test of one’s tolerance. Every animal in this race ran faster than she did and was more confident than she was. Everyone watching started to worry; they doubted whether Little Turtle was good enough to take part in this challenging race.

Without saying a word, Little Turtle kept up her effort, moving toward her goal, that is, the peak of the mountain, step by step. It was indeed a difficult route. There were a lot of hurdles and steep slopes along the way. Little Turtle had no skills, no physique, no talent, not even support from her friends and relatives. She had nothing but a strong will and belief. She wanted to give herself a chance, to be able to complete this race.

The only thing Little Turtle could do was to take on all the challenges with courage and learn more about herself from every day’s ups and downs. She strongly believed that with the right direction and continuous effort she could, one day, reach her goal. As time went by, more and more animals quit the race, while Little Turtle still kept on running, at her own speed. Finally, after 15 years, she reached the top of the mountain. Surprisingly, on the final destination, she found another mountain, which was much taller and far away from the one she was standing on. She smiled and realized that it was the beginning of another race.

I will talk later about the ending of Little Turtle’s story.

I would like to first introduce myself to you. I, Venus Lo, am an average girl. I think one can be said to be a successful person when he or she has made his or her full effort to make himself or herself a better person.

- I started working as an insurance agent in 1996. I was 23 that year.
- I was born in a poor family. My parents had six children; I am the youngest.
- I have been a Christian since my high school years.
- I am not a girly type of girl.
- I like to try new things and take adventures.
- I am a positive thinker!
- I am an average lady; there is nothing special about my life.
- I have spent 15 years reaching my goal of MDRT.

Someone may say, “Oh come on, it took you 15 years to become a member of MDRT? I don’t think that’s something
you can proud of.” But others may say, “What makes you successful throughout these years of struggle?”

I think most of you know that I am actually the little turtle. When I was young, I worked as a merchandiser for three years. With the hope of building my own business, I joined Prudential as an insurance agent. My family and friends disagreed with my choice at that time. However, I still wanted to give myself a chance.

Not long after I started working as an insurance agent, I learned about MDRT. What attracted me the most was the core value of MDRT—“Whole Person.” As described by MDRT, I wished to improve in every single dimension, and I set this to be my standard of success. Since that day, I’ve continued to equip myself using this MDRT spirit.

Though it took me 15 years to achieve my goal of MDRT, I do appreciate my persistence. I found the secret of success through continuous learning. I know that I can keep myself at the level of MDRT by realizing what I have learned throughout the year. My first MDRT holds significant meaning to me. Other than the honor itself, it’s a breakthrough, it’s a realization of my own belief—just to be a better self. So what’s next? Why did Little Turtle find the destination to actually be a new starting point?

Set no limit for yourself. The only reason Little Turtle insisted on going on was to make a better self. Then why did she find that the destination was actually another starting point of another journey?

I still remember that it took me all of 2010 to achieve MDRT in 2011. Among all 419 MDRT honor recipients, my ranking was 378, about the last one to get there. I can still recall the promise I made to myself while I was attending the Annual Meeting in Atlanta—I wanted to be a life member; I wanted to be awarded MDRT for 10 consecutive years! That’s how Little Turtle enrolled in another tougher race at the destination point of her first race.

What impressed me most in my first MDRT Annual Meeting in Atlanta was shared by Walter Bond, an NBA player. His speech on “how to be bigger, faster, and stronger” inspired me a lot. I then questioned myself: “Can I be bigger, faster, and stronger in 2011?” I decided to be bigger, faster, and stronger by giving myself a challenge in 2011, that is, to achieve MDRT qualification in nine months, to achieve 1.5 times MDRT by year’s end, and to assist others in achieving MDRT. I believe that what I gained in those 15 years could help a lot of people along this route.

As planned, it took me nine months to qualify for MDRT, and eventually, I achieved 1.4 times the MDRT production requirement and shared my experience in MDRT with more than 1,000 people on 13 teams. Vivian, who was one of them, is here with me today.

Is there any first-timer of MDRT sitting in this convention center? I would invite you to stand up to receive a round of applause from all of us! You deserve this! Remember how you got here, and keep it up. That’s the trick to getting life membership.

Let me share a secret with all of you. There’s a beauty pageant organized by the leading Hong Kong television station every year. One of the awards, namely, Miss Friendship, is given to the contestant who wins the most friendships. She who holds the title is responsible for promoting Hong Kong all over the world. I know it’s funny, but I gave myself a “Miss Friendship, MDRT” award, and I promote MDRT wherever I go! And it’s worth mentioning that I am also a friendly beauty!

From the experience of last year, I learned that I set no limitations on myself. MDRT is no longer a goal—it’s a signpost, and this signpost provides one with a direction, to dedicate oneself to be a better person. As the Bible teaches us, “You have been faithful over a few things; I will set you over many things” (Matthew 25:23). Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, and you will eventually be a success. This is what the Bible teaches us, and it is the core value of MDRT.

Using this principle, why should you have to limit yourself with only one MDRT? Why not go for more? Is this all you’ve got? By summing up a few MDRTs, your next goal should be Court of the Table. Through this path of Court of the Table, I will continue to learn, to explore, and to look forward to meeting a better self.

God has given everybody different talents and abilities. Everyone has his or her own story. In this event last year, there was a person from Hong Kong who was also passionate about MDRT, named Patric [Patric Leung Wai Ming]. I can still recall his presentation on our way back to Hong Kong from last year’s Annual Meeting. He truly helped all the people around him achieve their goals. I am one of those lucky people to whom he has given his kind advice and assistance. At the Annual Meeting there are people who have been a holder of MDRT for 40 years; the longest one is 57 years. When they stood up, I could feel their energy and passion. This is how I want to be! There’s a long way to go before I become a holder of MDRT for 57 years!

I decided I wanted to become a member of MDRT. Though it took me 15 years, throughout this journey I
learned how to be persistent and how to try my best and improve every day. This year I have set my new goal: Court of the Table and Top of the Table. I will stay focused; I will focus on the way of success and stay humble in order to learn more.

Another key element of success is attitude. With a positive mind and living with positive people, we can find different methods to help us live with positive energy.

Last year, several friends and I worked together toward our goal of MDRT. Only one of them failed at last, but she excels in every dimension. What’s missing is a positive mind. We should keep this attitude in every aspect of our lives, not only when dealing with clients.

You must have heard of the famous quote of the honorable Mr. Steve Jobs: “Stay hungry. Stay foolish.” No matter how smart you are, there must be something in this world that you can learn.

When I first set Court of the Table as my goal last year, I heard people say that Court of the Table is very different from MDRT. Since then I have started to ask around about the difference, talked to Court of the Table members, and learned from them. Even though I might not understand completely right away, I know that I have started the execution engine.

There were a lot of hurdles along the way for Little Turtle. I believe the same applies to my future. Knowing ourselves is of crucial importance, and I know what my strengths are: I am hardworking, positive, friendly, persistent, healthy, and diverse.

To fly higher, there are two things that you have to be aware of:

1. Comparing yourself to others
2. Your soul—the inner part

If life were like a card game, we might find people around us who are an ace. When we listen to others’ speeches, we might think, “Oh well, you can do that, because you are ‘blah, blah, blah’ or you have ‘blah, blah, blah.’” But in fact, in most cases they’ve got only four aces, with one king behind. The key is how to use those 52 cards; it’s a matter of sequence and skills.

I suggest you change the questions to yourself to “How can I achieve the same goal with the cards, that is, my resources? How can I do the same?”

Find your soul. Certainly, life has its ups and downs. Through these experiences, we learn more about ourselves and handle each of them well.

I have had a lot of hardships in these 15 years, including one of my friends having a serious accident, being sued in a legal case, my dad’s cancer, and my niece’s illness. These hardships turned me into an angel, to comfort others and myself. I thank the insurance profession. It provides me the training to be positive and teaches me to embrace my heart with strength and courage.

Another approach I found that works for me is exercise, specifically aerobic exercise. When things don’t feel right, go for a walk, jog, or swim. Do it for at least 45 minutes. This will put you in the best condition to take on more challenges!

Bless all of you. Run to your own paramount! Be the best of best!