“I see my path, but I don't know where it leads. Not knowing where I'm going is what inspires me to travel it.”

Rosalia de Castro, Spanish writer and poet

All of you know that you are coming to the end of your high school career, and you know there is a path before you, but as the quotation above states, you may not know where your path leads. This uncertainty likely makes many of you excited, and inspires you.

At this point in your life, you are almost finished high school and are planning on graduating. It is such an exciting time because you are going to be more independent, and the world is at your fingertips. You are ready to take on life's adventures, and turn all of your dreams into reality.

Many of you will head directly to the work world, or will attend college or university, or perhaps will take on an apprenticeship to one day be a skilled tradesperson. Whatever you have decided, the future is exciting. Or is it?

#### **Did you know?**

#### It is very common for many high school graduates to worry about life after high school. The results of a Gallop poll are published in a 2004 article entitled, “*Teens' Dreams Grounded in Reality*.” When asked if teens were worried about getting a job, 8% responded saying they were very worried and 27% said they were somewhat worried.

#### Apprehension is a normal reaction because many people fear the unknown. Most of the things you have done so far in your life have been predictable, such as attending school, having someone support your financial needs, and providing a roof over your head.

#### Heading down the path of life after high school is going to be an adventure; you are going into the unknown!

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#### **Journal #1**

#### Reflect on some of your best memories and experiences. Jot down on a piece of paper some of these memories. You know, the ones that bring back strong feelings of happiness.

Read the following poem by Robert Frost, an American poet, entitled, “The Road Not Taken.”

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| **The Road Not Taken**  *Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,*  *And sorry I could not travel both*  *And be one traveller, long I stood*  *And looked down one as far as I could*  *To where it bent in the undergrowth;*  *Then took the other, as just as fair,*  *And having perhaps the better claim,*  *Because it was grassy and wanted wear;*  *Though as for that the passing there*  *Had worn them really about the same,*  *And both that morning equally lay*  *In leaves no step had trodden black.*  *Oh, I kept the first for another day!*  *Yet knowing how way leads on to way,*  *I doubted if I should ever come back.*  *I shall be telling this with a sigh*  *Somewhere ages and ages hence:*  *Two roads diverged in a wood, and I--*  *I took the one less travelled by,*  *And that has made all the difference.*  *By Robert Frost* |  |

This poem can have many interpretations, but it is safe to say that when the person travelling came to the two paths, he or she thought about which to take, not knowing where either path would lead. This is much like you right now as you enter the next phase of your life. As the poem states, the path that was taken was the one that made all the difference, and so is the path that you will take in your immediate future.

Like anything that is unknown, or considered risky, being prepared is essential. For example, you would never go on a sightseeing trip to Vancouver for the weekend without being prepared with your wallet, a change of clothes, maps, and tourist information. Being prepared for the trip, risks, or exciting opportunities requires a bit of planning.

**Journal #2**

Take a moment and think about how you feel about graduating from high school and moving on to the next chapter in your life. Are you excited? Are you a bit nervous about the unknown? Think of three things you are most excited about and the three things you are a bit concerned about.