

Dr. Kroto,

This may seem a little odd, but you did something years ago that made an enormous impact on me and I wanted to thank you for it.

I met you probably five years ago at a reception for an award my friend was receiving--it was a high school science thing and you were the featured speaker. I found the program today, and I'd had you sign it because your presentation made a really big impact on me, and I wanted to thank you, because it was part of a series of things that happened to put me where I am now.

I grew up in a very fundamentalist religious environment, and it had never occurred to me that anyone could have any sort of fulfillment outside of that strict setting, and you were one of the first people I met who seemed to. It changed the way I looked at religion, and my obligation to it, and forced me to start examining my own biases.

I was, at the time, struggling with a serious depression as the result of my religious questions, and was afraid that if I realized that my religion was wrong, the value of my own life would be forfeited. You were (and still are, sadly) one of the only people I know of who uses their platform to remind people that those kind of fears aren't based in reality.

Anyway, the long and short of it is that I'm starting my PhD in political science and Masters tomorrow and I have you, in part, to thank. So thank you for being as blunt and up front about your beliefs as you were at that presentation, it helped me enormously as a person and student.

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