Topic: Life brings many disappointments as well as satisfactions. Tell us about a time in your life when you experienced disappointment, or faced difficult or trying circumstances. How did you react?

"Your software got into the top three" My coach congratulated me after thrusting the door open. I jumped wildly with an ineffable happiness. The good news deliverer joyfully continued: "Your presentations will be held in the S9 television studio and be broadcasted on VTV2 (the Vietnam's main educational channel). Your parents must be proud of you". Presentations? Astonishment was written all over my face. I felt like falling from cloud nine to a murky abyss where my old monster was waiting to eat me alive. This very monster had been haunting me for many years. No matter how hard I tried to hide in crowds or sought help from people around me, it always found a way to corner me and brutally "crushed" my throat. This time, I believed that it could kill me. Its name was "Shyness".

"I have to do something", I told myself while pacing back and forth in my room. "Should I malinger?" I shouted "No" at myself. I hated giving up. I wanted to try so that I could lose or win. Yet I knew that if I had to stand on the stage and speak now, I would struggle to utter a word and be dumb, thinking of nothing to say. "That's it!" I hastily wrote down all that I wanted to say on a piece of paper. I believed I would be fine if I could learn by heart the script word by word. I had the paper with me all the time and read it out loud over and over. Murmuring in the bathroom, I tried to look at myself speaking in the mirror. Having lunch with a mouthful of sandwich, I glued my eyes to the paper. Lying on my bed, I saw the paper flying around on the ceiling. I shut my eyes and mumbled the script again…

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I was standing on the platform now, hardly breathing. So many people! The talking sprang from everywhere, echoing like the laughing of my monster. Dozens of cameras swarmed around like hungry frightful mouths ready to swallow me. I felt tiny, very tiny confronting too gigantic a monster. Every word from the paper vanished from my mind. I felt feeble, unable to say anything. I did not want the whole country to laugh at me and my program. My program! I startled as I thought about it. I had worked many days and nights on it. I wanted everybody to like my software and use it. Why did I hesitate to present it? I was the one who had created it and I knew that my program deserved to shine. Taking a deep breath, I started presenting my program. I did not care about my script anymore. I knew more than anyone else what my program could do and what I liked about my program. As I was moving on from displaying the software's functions to explaining its applications, I felt the same joy and delight I had when I was programming. I had built all the bricks with my hands and now I proudly showed the house. Ten minutes passed unconsciously. Applauses burst out and reverberated across the room. Blazing lights on stage all beamed at me. I did not know if people just politely clapped or not but I fell in love with this new experience. I did not expect to have such a wonderful feeling of an artist after singing his own composition. I suddenly recognized that for a long time my questions had not been "What can I enjoy?" but "What if I lose?" - the threat my monster always wanted to infest. People raised their hands and asked me questions. Some tried to check if I really made the program. Fruitless! Blocks of code born from my sleepless days were ingrained in my mind. Looking at his watch, the MC wanted to continue his program. Ignoring him, aloud I said "Please ask if you have any question", my software and I were having fun…