

# **EKEKERE'S MOTIVATIONAL BIBLE**

**ALL THE INSPIRATION YOU NEED TO  
ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS**



**SAMUEL UFOT EKEKERE**

**EKEKERE'S**  
**MOTIVATION**  
**BIBLE**

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## CHAPTER 1

# THE MARKET PLACE LESSON

Walking with a woman to the market is rigorous work. The reason is that women tend towards soft spending. They are quite good at pricing and getting a better bargain than men are. They will choose to spend time at the market over one commodity until they get it at the price they think they can spare even if they have more than the cost price the seller is offering.

Men show off even when they don't have much. When they buy at the market, they do so at higher prices because often, they lack the patience to bargain and they think it's unmanly doing so. The market sellers make it easier with their phrase "you are not a woman, bro" meaning only women should bargain to the extreme.

In life's marketplace, every buyer buys as a matter of choice. The seller presents numerous options and says to the buyer, "make a choice, there are different variants." The choices available on the market are often so much, especially because

there are many industries that produce similar products with varying quality and price.

The reason behind a buyer buying a product at the marketplace varies. The reasons may include quality, taste, need, the amount of money available etc. The market provides the perfect communion for all reasons.

Now, here's the marketplace lesson. We do not visit the market because every other person is visiting. We do because we have our own needs to solve. We close our eyes to what other persons are buying however much they buy and focus on what we want even if we may need what those other persons are buying.

The need for contentment cannot be overemphasized. If we keep repeating it, it pays. Our choices should be relative to our capacity. Though we may need much more than what we have and may not be satisfied with our current position or financial status, yet we must find fulfillment in our present status by going for what's within our means.

Assuming your pocket's fat and you desire to get some shirts from the market. You visit the boutique and hanging on the shelves are shirts of various designers at different price tags. You pick the shirts you want and offer to pay for them at a uniform price as against the boutiques varying price tags. The attendant may reprove you and alert you to the individual price

that each shirt carries. He may offer to show you shirts from which you could select from at the price you intend to buy. If you make a choice of high-cost shirts, then you pay for it else you can go for low-cost shirts.

Many persons want the best of life but are not ready to put in the necessary cost input. They would select the best cars at the showroom but quiver at the price the attendant calls, they go for a four bedroom duplex in a posh part of town but hate the value the landlord places over his property, they love the scenic view of the resort but dislike the high cost of Coca-Cola being sold inside it.

It's common to hear people brag at their ability to have their way and get more than they could bargain for. While this is possible, often the means are unethical. These persons cut corners. Though they succeed and become the envy of all eyes, they know within themselves the void of discontentment that their seeming success brings them.

The sellers at the market are aware that they have a variety of persons to service. They provide something for everyone and they expect when you come to buy, you come and buy as you have. However, sometimes the sellers run promos to attract people to buy. They give grand gifts to buyers who buy from them. In this case, the buyers are seduced to buy and may end

up with huge gifts much bigger than what they had anticipated buying.

There are opportunities that come in our everyday living that may not necessarily require more input than what we have always done. It just requires us doing what we have always done when it matters most like recharging our phones during promo periods of GSM networks.

We don't have to wait for opportunities when we can instigate them wholesomely. We can create opportunities for ourselves by developing credible means through which we could render service to people who will get attracted to us even if they never need our service.

The marketplace could be so vast a learning location but you might not have noticed it because often you find yourself so busy trying to get one product or the other.

Now you know. You have a choice.

# A PLAYER OF LIFE

We are familiar with soccer teams; Chelsea, Manchester United, Real Madrid, Barcelona, Bayern Munich, and their likes. Some persons fan these teams. A collection of players and coaching crew make up these teams. Often, these players may be renowned or at the start of their football career. A team buys players because the coach considers them good enough for the role he intends them to play for the overall good of the team.

Have you considered playing in a team called *Life*? You do have a club side in *life* and all the persons you see around you are fellow teammates. Every player wishes to play for a big club, in a great championship or in a grand stadium. Better still, the players want to play in the final and even win the championship. In team life, you have the best stadium on the earth. You may not have a variety of stadia to play on like football players do but you do have a variety of scenarios to challenge.

Those players on the pitch do not all play the same role. The role each player plays varies with his or her capacity, technique, strength, speed, and tactics. While some players do have a variety of capabilities, some do have just one, yet they do have

to play as a team. As humans, we have diverse talents and capacities. These capabilities differ from person to person but we do have to apply these talents as a whole with other persons. Our individual talents will be useless without the touch of skill from another. While we play in the game of life, we need others too. Our iron has to sharpen another person's iron. Everyone around us has a varying role to play. Some are parents, guardians, teachers, doctors, scientist etc., but they do have to work together for the common good. Whatever one's capacity may be, however, illiterate or literate, we are in the game of life because each one of us is important. No one must play down on our usefulness.

A team would not be successful without the inspiration and tactical capacity of the coach. You do have a coach too. God is the coach. He ultimately positions us where best fits us. He has the ultimate formation and knows how you would technically fit into life. He could possibly have placed you in some other continent but he placed you where you are because he has deemed it fit for you to play your role with his guidance where you are. God knows who you would be, something you are blind to.

Though God stands as a coach on the sidelines, he still allows us the initiative to think and make decisions. He is not making the decisions for us. He only acts as a guide allowing us the



absolute choice. He knows how talented we are and he expects that we will bring our talents to bear in the position he has positioned us.

Players play for the overall good of the team as well as for personal achievement too. They do want to see their team win while they also want to win individual laurels too. In life, there are many laurels to challenge. While we pursue individual goals and laurels, we are also to pursue goals for the common good of man.

Football players do have periods of personal challenges. Sometimes they suffer from injury worries and at other times, it could be a dip of form. These periods are depressing yet players often manage to come through it. We do have challenges over the course of life. In the face of these challenges, we have to affirm our place and fight for a starting shirt. We have to challenge those bugging situations. However daring a situation may be, we will come out of it if we decide to fight on without giving up. Remember tough times never last but tough persons often do outlast their challenges. You can take solace in the fact that however bad your present predicament is, it has to happen somehow so that you can become a better player and challenger.

Sometimes the coach deems it fit to replace a player in a game. The player may be doing well yet the coach replaces him

because he seeks to protect the player for future games. In other cases, the player may be unfit thus prompting the coach to replace him so that the game may improve. When replaced from our present position, it is because there is a better position out there we will have to fit.

Finally, after a long spell playing, players retire from the game. Someday after all the hassles of this life, we will retire. We determine the quality of life after retirement by how well we have performed and amassed during our years of strength. Now that you have the strength to play in this game called life, play well, and be sure to always win.

# A WORLD OF NO LIMITS

You will be familiar with the cliché “whatever goes up comes down.” During your days at primary school, your teachers would have done one of those “throw up objects” practicals to prove that the above cliché holds. We jumped up at such opportunities and happily concluded that however high one goes, the chance is he will come down soon. It’s baffling that in real life scenarios, we have accepted this cliché as the standard for living. How about if you decide not to come down?

Someone might exclaim that’s not possible!

If you are afraid that you may come down from that high pedestal you are at or are currently aiming, it is understood. You aren’t the only one there. There are billions of persons like you across the world. How about fashioning a way to beat gravity? Yes, gravity. The law seems to affect just about all human action in this world. I discovered it.

I discovered that there are a small number of persons who are have discovered the world where there are no limits. They have

discovered the world where gravity stands at attention while they continually reach for space. This small number is doing great things across the world while the rest watch in amazement at the prolific lifestyle that characterizes this limitless life.

There are those who just bounce at the top once they get there. There is no chance they might come down anytime soon because they are aware of the limitless possibilities of the world without limits.

Think of the astronauts outside earth whose world has no boundaries. National space agency of America NASA has continued to welcome new information about the universe every single day because of the vastness of the world outside the earth. The probes won't stop getting new information and the knowledge quest about the universe continues unabated.

Those who live in a limitless world find themselves in a world of information. They just can't stop learning because that's the livewire. How much you know affects how well you will think. To stay at a position of unlimited performance and achievement, you must continue to acquire new knowledge. The day you stop learning, you practically begin your slow death. That day, the cliché at the beginning of this write-up will catch up with you.

Death is a necessary factor that ends the physical life of every man. It, however, does nothing to the spiritual and metaphysical effects of the man who has discovered the world of no limits. He is always quoted, read and studied. He forever continues to inspire people after he is long gone. These kinds of persons break the death limit and live on forever.

We are always challenged by the lives of personalities like Jesus Christ, Mohammed, Abraham Lincoln and more recently, Martin Luther, Gandhi, Mandela, Steve Jobs etc. These men knew that they were actually in a life of no limits and they lived their lives with the limits non-existent. They are all dead but they've lived beyond death's limits since then.

How do you live this limitless life? The primary lifestyle is that one that affects lives in the most positive way. Human life is filled with limits, limits of hunger, poverty, lack, sickness etc. The limitless man finds a way to solve these problems by providing solutions to these limits. The moment you find problems that have limitations around it and you begin to undo the limits, you break into a world of no limitations. That's what some of the famous inventors whose names we still read and hear about understood when they searched for problems and began to solve them.

The man who discovers he can live beyond limits search for challenges whose solutions he can offer and goes about

offering it in the most energetic way. He often lives the world providing so much solutions and so much knowledge that generations after him depend on him for information and inspiration.

There is no limitation that cannot and should not be subdued. That's actually our role when we were each sent to the world. We came to find some problems we can solve and then live generations with steps to follow to also solving similar problems in the future. We find purpose when we discover that limitless possibilities exist.

Finding solutions will require you dare. Challenges are like huge mountains but the man who looks at the mountain and dares to climb soon discovers that he is on a roller coaster at the other side of the mountain.

One last word is, there are actually no limits. Whatever limits we find around us are the limits we accept. Your destiny is in your hands.

# ACTIVATE YOUR SUCCESS? ACT YOUR FAITH

I've grown up with many big dreams that have not surfaced on this side of the earth just like you have. As a child, you remember all that great "I want to be" stories and how massive and impressive they were. I've looked back to many of those big impressive dreams I had and thought "what happened to them?" such massive dreams could have brought me success by now if I pushed to have them just beyond the mental state.

Success is a desirable attribute that naturally strings with every human as we grow. Because failure often hangs around clearly, and with a far-reaching and hurting impact, success always is the better option with the joy that often arrives from it.

However, success doesn't come so easy. Failure always finds a way to battle success by placing barriers. This makes success very difficult to get.

In spite of these difficulties, many success stories have been recorded and will increasingly be recorded of people who have broken the failure barrier and activated their success.

There is always the tendency to reach out for success. We naturally believe that success is always at the end of any venture we intend to venture into. Yes, we are great at creating pictures of where we desire to be. We talk about it, dream about it, sleep on it and jump over it. However, failure always finds a way to poke its head just at that point when the dream is about teeing off.

As a fact, failure always puts a stumbling just before we can begin in the direction of our faith or it gives us space to believe something is possible and then suddenly hits us surprisingly back to where we had started from.

The good news is, everyone has a right to success and it is in everyone to succeed. God had that wired up already as a capacity to be tapped that can help us do much more than we had thought. If you have the faith and believe that you could get something done, you can actually get it done.

This is what actually happens. Failure has a partner called fear that walks together against success and its partner faith. Mr. Failure often sends Mr. Fear to do the dirty job before he pounce's his fist to do the finishing. They both could be very



strong if they find the right prey. However, a man of faith is one way off to a bright start against them

A man may have faith in the strength of his ideas but that's never enough because fear always whispers the question "are you sure it would work?" you would hear someone say "this is a great idea and I believe it has the possibilities to make huge success" but that does not actually lead to the success

Faith only works when it walks towards a particular direction. Success is only achieved after faith has walked and worked. If you have that big picture and believe in its actualization, its great but it's just not enough. Enough rises when you arise and tell yourself, now I am walking towards the big picture.

Failure and fear rescind after success finds a stronghold by an acted faith. Success is always slow to act and doesn't show itself except you walk towards making it arrive, unlike failure who is always hanging around for that one opportunity to pounce.

If you believe you have a great picture, that is not enough. Success at that picture is only activated when you act your faith.

# ANSWERS BLOWING IN THE WIND

My hearts aching for my generation, this generation, victims of a failed system, a system they are now forced to repair. I hate to think this way but it hurts being part of it. I wake up every morning and think, “Today is the day to make the difference.”

I am up early in the morning, nervous. To relieve self, I walk around my neighborhood. It hurts to see that persons have become strangers in their own land, maimed and helpless to face each day’s lot. It leaves a raging question, “what had gone wrong?”

As a teacher over the hapless souls I am called to lift, I wonder at a future these little ones will be living in. The system is worse than it was in our time and we complained then. I hate to think this way but the question reechoes.

Jogging over to a newsstand could be a rewarding venture if something great is in the news. However, good things do not make the news. We believe good things are normal and should happen so we anticipate bad things. Reading the dailies is quite

hectic but I manage to when I can. I am welcome on front pages of pictures and stories of chaos. Again, the question reechoes.

The joy of reading the dailies on the newsstand is the community of fellow readers, brothers who sit in the comfort of their homes and know what happens inside the president's bedroom. I often manage to make a point or two and try to reach for hope but I see that right there in the hearts of those I should be getting consolation is the same fear, the same question.

I run to the comfort of my home to chew my bitter pill. I am victimized from connecting to the world. I love to imagine that I am in Europe or America where I hear, it would be a great sin for lights to go off for a second. I am afraid I would be lost in my dreams save for the shout of "up Nepa" and "oh, they have taken the light" from neighborhood kids. I heave a sigh and then I hear again the same question reecho.

I am very much human and often look for spiritual solace. I run to church to listen to the prelate speak so strongly about better days ahead. I recall hearing the same message repeatedly and the same Scripture verses. Nothing seemed to have changed

Rushing out from the church into the bus, I am welcomed by the smell of human flesh hustling to make ends meet. They seem unconcerned how tightly packed like cans of sardine in the rust rode bus they are. I read the pulses on their forehead

and they transmit frustration. I cannot help though I wish I could, but I try by whispering, "It is well" loudly.

The bus driver drops me at the bus stop and I run over to the platform to escape the wetting rain. I thought I had seen enough but then under my nose was this married pair drying their underwear in public glare. For a paltry sum of one dollar, the crowd had gathered to watch shame that should never have happened if everything was right. What had gone wrong?

I had seen enough and as I soliloquized, my heart beating in frustration, I realized that I am certainly a mirage. The gains of life remain a catastrophe for underneath our multimillion dollar fly-overs are the cage homes of men, women, and children who deserve better lives.

As a child who has no ideas what the answer to a question he is being asked is, raising his head and looking into space and hoping answers fall, I look up. I feel the wind blow and in the hush sound, I hear a voice whisper, "the answers are blowing in the wind."

# ARE YOU CONNECTED?

It's no more knowledge the giant strides the global system for mobile (GSM) has made over the landscape of the world. When this technology rode its way into Africa, I remember how in awe we held it. It was for the upper class and upper middle class and you were considered a god (at least for us who were kids) to have a mobile. We played pranks though because we loved the attention and attraction that having a mobile device could give.

Those days, calculators made in the form of mobile were vogue, (I guess the creators were trying to break the divide). A student who was lucky to have the back cover of his dad's phone without his dad noticing would wear the covering on a mobile calculator and would bring it to school. What? All the students looked in awe. Those close to the student would come around to herald their friend only to discover that it was all a shade. However, because of the attraction, they'd pretend it was some real phone and then go about mimicking fake calls. If you schooled during this era, this is a familiar story. Thank goodness, the phone is now child's play that even kids now use them as toys.

The success of the GSM is one story you can learn from. Practically, before a telecommunication giant can have a share of a country's cake, they first recognize the embedded investment capacity that that country can offer. You have to recognize the great future that you have and which you must be anticipatory of. How you measure your future, is how you will live it. Expect that something great will come out from the idea that will make your future what you would like it to be.

You would need a license. Those giants get a license from the federal government. They'd have to pay quite a lot to get it. You have a license that you have to pay for in order for you to have the opportunity to live the great life you envisage about yourself. You need to buy knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. These three virtues are the initial license you must have if you are to have an opportunity to live the big life.

Once the license is bought, it's not Uhuru. The telecommunication giant has to develop infrastructure. What's your infrastructure? It's the desire, determination, decision, discipline, dexterity, courage, strength, ambition, hope, faith, peace, faith, vision, dreams, orderliness, ambiance etc.

Recognize that the infrastructures for telecommunication are many but subdivided into the following groups: the central mobile station, the base station subsystem, the network switching subsystem, and the operation support subsystem.

Your infrastructures vary, divided into intrinsic and extrinsic categories in which the above-mentioned qualities fall. The intrinsic for virtues within you, and extrinsic for virtues that are outside your person.

Having infrastructure on the ground is great but someone has to provide the expertise to build them up. These giants employ people. The fact that you have all the virtues you have does not mean you have it all. You will need the help of others to help you develop your infrastructure and everything you've got into a world class brand, the great you.

Slowly and slowly base stations are switched on in various parts of the country, one at a time and over time across the country. The full benefits of all your input and people input in you do not come suddenly. It comes one at a time. You patiently have to wait for the inputs to trigger the changes and over time, you become what you want to be.

These giants don't stop at developing because they are achieving some success. Their goal always is to cover all the landscape. You don't have to stop till you achieve everything you have to achieve. Keep investing in your knowledge bank, develop on your infrastructures, and improve from where you are.

There is always room for improving as much as technology changes and that's what telecommunication companies do.

They try to update themselves with new technology. You got to be on top of the knowledge cadre. Be on the lookout for new knowledge and ideas that can make you always on top.

The reason these telecommunication giants exist is to serve people. You must understand that you live to serve. The driving force for the attainment of your future endpoint is to serve and offer credible service.

Often in capitalist driven economies, space for competition is open. There are a handful of communication giants driving for their share of the pie. You too must realize that where you are heading is where many have eyes on but it's the most hardworking who gets it all. You have to develop yourself to be on top. That's what the varying services and some off the hook offers of these telecommunication companies tend to tackle. They want more customer base so they look for means to attract customers and satisfy those who are in their network so that they do not think of going out of it. You have to be ahead by keeping tabs with the latest of ideas.

There is enormous knowledge you can learn if you take your time to not just use your phone but also to understand that it works with the same underlying principle that can guide your life.

You may not understand this if you are not connected. Are you connected?



# ARE YOU OUT OF ACES?

Part lyrics of Kenny Roger's song "the gambler" reads; son I've made a life out of reading people's faces, knowing what the cards were, by the way, they held their eyes, so if you don't mind my saying, I can see you are out of aces, for a taste of your whisky, I'd give you some advice. If you are familiar with the card game, the term "aces" is near knowledge. The ace is the opportunist joker that can make or mar a game. A Gambler could have all the other cards but there's a beam of smiles if he's got an ace.

In our lives, there are things that elude us and keep us unhappy even if we have within our reach some of the best things of life. These things hold important positions in our lives and could keep us empty and doubtful of the future if we don't have them. If you find yourself in a rough spot restless about something, you are out of aces.

Life comes with its many challenges. It's like a card game where you have to challenge the opposition player. Challenging life to a duel could be gruesome because of life's seeming experience in pulling some of the greatest minds down. We find ourselves

as challengers by virtue of our living on earth. If you must survive the life game, "I'd give you some advice."

If you are going to play the life game, you will have to play it right. You can't afford to lose your best things to life. You need to acknowledge that you can't have everything; you get some and lose others. The smart thing will be for you to go for the best things and let go the little ones. We need to know what to throw away and what to keep. Our callous minds may drive us towards grabbing all we can grab but we need to do some good thinking.

The valuable things in life are few as compared to things of less value. We could easily get the things of less value like in getting other cards, but for the valuable one I mean the aces, they require some patience, perhaps prayers, and luck and sometimes you will have to quit holding the less valuable things to have a grasp of things of value. Knowing what to throw away or what to keep is often very challenging. You may find it difficult probing your mind into the things you should throw and the things you should keep. It's always tough. However, the responsibility still falls on you to make the decision.

Making these decisions requires painstaking thought. You will have to measure your value system and rate them on the scale of priorities from the most important (the aces) to the least important. Put behind your mind that however much the

number of least important cards are, your aces must count. You can't afford to lose your aces.

If you must truly survive against life, you've got to:

**Know when to hold on.** You don't just jump to conclusions. Wait, Give some time, the tables may change and what you considered a great idea may just turn out a bad one. Try enjoying the waiting time while it last.

**Know when to fold on.** Sometimes we have to hide our personalities to see the other side of situations. We don't come out yelling what positions we occupy every moment opportunity offers. You can hide under your shell and watch.

**Know when to walk away.** Sometimes, it's great we accept defeat and quietly walk away from the scene. Accepting defeat does not mean weakness.

**Know when to run.** When you find yourself in a tight corner when you do know your aces are at risk, it's time to run.

I hope you've found an ace that you can keep

# BE WISE

Look at the back of a cigarette pack, you will find the statement, “the federal ministry of health warns that tobacco smokers are liable to die young.” I notice the same on every advert of these cigarette big Whigs on TV and radio. What’s startling though is that while the warning has persisted, the number of smokers has been on the rise and increasingly too, the number of victims.

It is funny to note how unwise smokers could be in the face of a daring warning of the implications they get to face. They often discover their foolishness on the hospital bed, praying and hoping to get out soon enough for a new leaf.

Like smokers, humans generally would continue with an action however the warning against it until they are hit with the negative effects. We choose to take risks blindly thinking we are on the right path even against warnings from knowledgeable authority and then quiver at the outcome. It is not surprising the many casualties of so many delirious acts could possibly have avoided them if they had chosen to listen to wise words from those who knew.

Some persons see warnings as an opportunity to create personality. They give the impression of being godlike; going ahead with the action they have been warned against. The problem about this people is that they never walk alone. They carry with them followers who fuel them with the impetus to carry on towards the grave. Surprisingly, these followers are naive jumping straight on the bandwagon without questioning the necessity for their action.

We are faced with dilemmas, especially because some actions though wrong are given the green light in the media because of the profitability of such actions to the pockets of a few gluttonous beings. Like the cigarette adverts that are often seductive to the eyes of non-smokers and smokers alike even with the warning, we are blinded by the seemingly attractive and enticing nature of the things that do have the capability to hurt us the most that we hardly believe they could truly hurt.

The strength of the crowded band draws us away from having real sight of the problem we could face in the future. This is often challenging because of the crowd's seductive nature to what's wrong. It's the crowd that goes rioting; the crowd often fails to listen. The statement "everyone's doing it, so what's wrong with it?" could deceive you.

One truth you must be certain about is that the crowd is the target. Once a thing can attract the crowd, it's certainly going to

attract a large number of people and over time, the number would increase. Advertisers understand the power they have and they play with the sensual character that most people have. They paint a great picture and after a rigorous process of analyzing human minds in their mind labs, they release the adverts to the world of people who feverishly go for the products.

Not everything that looks great at face value is great. Everyone may be jumping at it but that's everyone, not you. You have to take your time and make a choice decision. You can afford to let the crowd go and walk alone when you have to. The crowd may bust and yell. They may call you a freak and term you all manner of names. It helps if you choose to stand away from the crowd.

Before you jump at that seemingly attractive venture, take your time to understand the cons and pros. ask yourself the following questions.

- Will what I'm doing affect me negatively or positively?
- Will what I'm doing affect others positively or negatively?
- Will I be able to defend myself in taking this action in a case of a fallout?
- Am I taking this action because everyone's doing it?
- If I were to independently carry out this action, would I love to do it?

When you've found answers to these questions, you can head on.

The whole truth lies in you applying wisdom over your affairs. Listen to others and learn from their experiences. Take warnings however little they may seem, they are invaluable to helping you lead a great life. Don't act blindly, check around you. The things that hurt are often things whose warnings we overlook. Be wise.

# THE “BELIEVE” FACTOR

The beauty of life is her ability to change circumstance when she deems fit. Life isn't always that Uhuru we anticipate coming into her would present. Some persons come to her holding golden spoons, some silver spoons, some bronze spoons, others aluminum spoons and some others still, plastic spoons. Whatever spoon variant you stepped into life with, you can replace it.

There is so much in life that offers joy but this much eludes most people who aren't privileged to connect to this joy bank. It is grueling challenging life from the position of an underdog. It often takes striving and a battle to challenge and win.

Life's situations have no permanent seats. They are unseated when the right challenger hits top gear. Damning situations can upturn and great moments can become checkered. Persons striving to make meaning of their lives can get it right if they really want. It just takes triggering the believe factor.

If you are struggling in pursuance of the better life, you aren't far from it. The better life might have eluded a great number of persons but if you believe, you can get it. Our “believe” is the



trigger upon which our bullets are shot towards the prime target, the better life. It is a continuous persistent push with an uncommon assurance that soonest what you want will get into your hands.

Our ability to believe comes from our will of complete dedication to the pursuance of the better future that we so much desire. It provides the platform upon which actions towards the actualization of our goals and dreams manifest.

Our object of believe arrives from our mind's camera. The mind creates graphic details absorbing images of what it considers as the better life from our environment, storing those images and processing them into pictures as the goal to pursue. The clearness of the picture increases the chance one will get at it. You won't want to have a picture that's not clear.

Opportunities in life may vary but everyone does have a right to the best of them. The things that hold most persons back from pushing for what they really want however clear the picture is the artificial barriers that are placed by society and themselves. People think they have a chance to attain a height but they never push for it because they accept the hypothetical debar placed around them. It is good to note that once you believe, no bars can stand.

The future attainment of our present picture only results from an absolute confidence in the possibility of the picture meeting

reality. The picture may seem gigantic, enormous, and even weird but they are possibilities. With certainty, pictures are created from scenes that already exist. What you've pictured already exist in this sphere; there is no impossibility clause on it. Your own picture only seems unique because it consists of a conjunction of various images only you have seen.

You can attain any height. Take the Obama success story for example. Believe rose far ahead of societal or racial barriers. Attaining presidency seemed an impossible feat for blacks and colored of America but it wasn't for Obama. His believe came from the fact that others had become president before him and he was only merely repeating what George Bush had done. Had Obama accepted the reality of his minority clause and stooped low in fear, he wouldn't have attained the feat which was the privy of every American as written in the American constitution.

The things you need to make your life the kind you always desired may not be available now but it has a place in the nearest future which your believe can help you drive to. Believe you will get that house, car, family, wife, husband, child, degree, certificate etc. Don't stop believing it until you get it.

When we believe with certainty about the future, life always has a way of playing out herself in the direction of believe. The

scenes play one by one and you'd discover yourself as the lead actor in what had once only being a mere dream.

Don't stop now, Just believe. What you want is right there closer than you think.

# WHAT YOU MUST DO BEFORE YOU DIE

Death is an inevitable factor of life. Whatever way we tend to look at it, we are increasingly close to it with each day that passes by. We are destined to close our eyes someday and never open it to this side of life. We fret over the thought of this especially if we have had the best times on this side. Well, we have no options over this fact so the faster we accept it, the better it helps us understand life better.

Understanding this reality helps us in building our lives on the right path. It's not in how long we live our lives but it's in how much our life has impacted on other lives. We live, not just for ourselves but also for the benefit of the whole, the world around us.

It is saddening how persons live their lives thinking everything in life is up for grasp. They choose to trample on the rights of others. They may seem to get away with their acts but they never get away with death.

There are other persons who have appreciated a great understanding of the death phenomenon. These persons understand that someday they will die. They answer the question “what will you be remembered for?” long before they begin to exist. They realize that to answer this question right, they have to begin to act now about that thing they have to be remembered for.

What will you be remembered for? Imagine you are dead now and you close your eyes and open it at the other side of life to watch your friends, acquaintances, and family. What will they be saying about you? Let’s not limit this to your family only; look at your neighborhood and your city. Who will be able to string his life to the benefits you have offered before now?

No one wants to talk about death. Seriously, we tend to think about death when we find ourselves in the hospital bed and pray we don’t get caught up in its wings. The fear of dying is so gruesome that it could leave a gory tale behind. However, it steals in unnoticed and mostly storms out a victor.

Death’s victory over our human existence can be short-lived only if we do know the real essence of our living. We live to bless, add value, make an impact, uplift and promote God’s kind of life on earth. What will count after all on earth is not the posh buildings we live in, neither is it the fancy cars we drive in nor the chains of industries we are able to acquire. It is those

lives we have helped transform; they are the stars that will speak for us. You will be remembered for what you have done.

It is on record that the best talents are found at the grave, men who would give their best if they had another chance. While you still live, you've got a chance to leave your footprints. The sands are still dusty enough and they are yelling at you, cmon come make your impact.

Those dead heroes you celebrate today once walked on this side of life. The world remembers them because they inflicted their impression on the people at their time and reckoned with history to remember them for their acts of bravery. We read about their stories and wonder how they got to do it. They understood one certain fact that all that matters isn't their personal benefits but a sacrificial living of their lives for humanity. Most of them might have died as peasants but they left wealth and so much of it behind. These persons left bestseller books, videos, and lots more.

Will you be just another statistic on this side of life that would just come and leave? Will you be a force to be reckoned long after you are gone? It's time to ponder. Before you die, before all we will know about you will be just your name, you can begin to make your impression. Now is the time.

What is it that you can do to effect some positive change in society? Begin at it now. Look around to find some need you

can solve, get at it. Your only chance to do it is now. Tomorrow may just be a story that should have been told.

# BOTH SIDES OF THE STORY

Do you remember that time you were little and you had had a brawl with your little sibling over menial everyday issues? Rather for your parents or guardian to listen to you both, they chose to take a stand with your sibling's side of the story believing him to be the underdog even when he caused the problem. You would have felt depressed, calculated how you would get your revenge on your sibling and muse over the inadequacies of your parents or guardian.

Many families have had their homes divided because someone failed to listen to all sides of the story. Favoritism ranked ahead of truth, thus bias judgments became the order. The inadequacies of families have thus been transferred into the larger society where lies and half-truths now pervade the air.

The extent of the failure of our social system is the result of the many half-truths we tell ourselves. The causes of conflicts have been tagged to social imbalance, truancy, and other negative vices. While this may be true, it's a half-truth. Conflicts are



often calculated processes sponsored by high profile individuals to disrupt peace in order to achieve their aim. Negative vices are only used as cover to perpetuate organized conflicts.

When a young man dies of suicide, doctors diagnose depression as the ailment and psychologists search out for the cause of the depression. They conclude that perhaps the young man's lover had left him, or he had lost his job or yet still he had failed his exam. They fail to realize how much the negative competitive influence of society caused by the marginalization between the haves and have-nots had influenced the young man who found himself unable to meet with the increasingly hypothetical high standard of his society.

Many wars the world over are considered as revolutions meant to free the populace and empower them against their autocratic leaders. Peace is lost and the country falls into a worst state than it was in the hands of the perceived autocratic leader. Every Dick and Harry gets a gun from a deal worth billions of dollars from international gun manufacturers and the bum sound is the day's order for a short while until autocratic leader is off seat and the people discover that no other person could have best fit the seat. At this point peace could never be possible.

The increasing trend of teenage pregnancy is alarming. Parents blame societal influences and the failure of the school system

to check their wards. They fail to realize that it all begins from their inadequacies to check them at home; what they watch, drink, who their friends are etc. They play the blame game and who loses are their wards.

More often than not, we allow ourselves the fun of enjoying the one-sided movie that the woods often show us where only one person is lead actor. We conclude that the success of the movie is a result of the charismatic attribute, tenacity as well as other creative attributes the actor possesses. We are blind to the fact that the actor is only merely acting out on orders from the producers and directors.

Just as money won't be complete without both sides, we can't characterize an event by considering just one view. We will be myopic and have a distorted view of the event.

Bias judgment of an event can have lasting implications like a feud between brothers, a breakdown between business partners, a lack of collaboration between team members etc. However, when we listen to everyone's voice, one is able to give sound judgment for the overall good of the group to which he belongs, thus discouraging apathy.

Don't conclude on an event or issue when you have not gotten enough knowledge to back up your conclusion. When the premise on which your conclusion is based is faulty, it's only a matter of time before cracks are noticed.

Get adequate knowledge and vary opinions. People's conclusion on a matter may vary and always varies. This is because, their knowledge bank defers. See reasons why they think differently, accept their difference, and see how to align the difference for the entire good of everyone.

One truth is that the story can only be complete when one tells it from his angle and another from her angle and then their individual stories are combined to produce the big hit complete story.

Before you make that conclusion, be sure you have heard all the sides there is to the story.

# BREAKING OFF THE POVERTY LIMIT

I listened attentively to a preacher preach about the damning effects of poverty some time ago. Its general knowledge, a huge population of the world is considered poor and tagged the lowly esteemed title of “third world”. It hurts that the wealth of the world is found in the hands of just a few while the bulk grind in oblivion in need of help and aid that are crumbs from the table of those that have.

Nobody ever envisages being born into the world poor. If it were possible to have chosen our place of birth, everyone would hurriedly get into the womb of a man like Bill Gates. Sadly though, the choices are not ours to make so we wake up into the world to see the opportunities that are either available or unavailable.

To be poor is no great tag and could be very depressing a title, so those who find themselves in that state strive to get themselves off the limit that it places. Being poor is barrier enough to getting the riches that we certainly desire to enjoy. It

will drag and pull one down every time he strives to get off it. That has been the struggle of many persons who desire to get off to the other side of the poverty divide where wealth is created and enjoyed.

It's true that many of those who have become famous and wealthy today had that poverty sting around them. They however chose to break off from the chains and it wasn't so easy a battle. They strived with poverty and at some point, they assumed they were losing but somehow, that big opportunity arrived.

I read through history and found out that the men who have had more marks actually had peasant beginnings. If you try to name them, you'd certainly find out that they were even poorer than today's poor. They made it, and we celebrate them for their awesome achievements and then wonder if the same miracle can happen to us.

Poverty could be like a chicken that have been snatched from the mother hen by a strong hawk. It will take quite a battle to get the prey off the hawk's claws if ever there is chance for it to happen.

Poverty is a mentality that sucks. It makes you think small and lower than you can be. It makes one look wretched however rich he is inside and destroys every iota of self believe. It could be disorienting and underrating to discover that you could

possibly do more than your present condition allows but you don't because you can't just figure out how to get it done.

Here's what I observed. Quite a number of those who had broken off from poverty were not satisfied just as every other person but they moved beyond un-satisfaction to discovery, a discovery of why they remain where they are, how those who have broken up from it made it and how they can live the bandwagon and be man enough to take up responsibility for the actions that creates wealth.

First things first, the kind of information you feed yourself. You won't want to be in an environment that celebrates mediocrity. You want to be fed with the right information that can gear up your mentality. Yes, the right information is important and from the right people too. If you are well informed from those who have had the experience of coming off the poverty bandwagon, you find useful marks that you can follow to also achieve the result you want to see happen.

The people you find around you too matters. It's better to stand alone than to be around men of mediocrity who are content being in the poverty bandwagon. You won't want to be drinking at a pub house of such men when you can spend a weekend at a five star hotel with celebrities and men of timbre and caliber. The cliché "show me your friend and I will tell you who you are" holds 95% of the time. Those around you define

your thinking mentality and influences what you think about. You'd be better off getting off their bandwagon alone than joining them in their short term celebration of mediocrity.

You have to believe that information from those who have achieved wealth is achievable and develop the energy and quest to act on the information you have derived from them. You have to activate your drive to get past poverty.

You could be the next big wealth story the world is waiting to hear. What are you doing? Get up and act.

# BUY NOW, THINK LATER

In the market of life, we are prone to impulsive buying especially when we seem loaded with some extra lucre. Money may be some servant but it has great masterly attributes. You might have had the opportunity to visit the market sometime with the intent of getting something but it happens that something else caught your fancy. You got caught in the web and offered to buy what you never anticipated and then shrieked at how irrelevant what you bought was to you.

Regrets have trailed some persons who lead their lives by acting first before thinking. They let impulse direct their course and they fall out from the intended plan if ever they had a plan. While impulse could direct our path, a half of the time, our impulse often leads us astray. We ask ourselves questions like “why did I buy this?” or “why did I take that action?”

The need to plan our lives cannot be underestimated. From the start of our intended project, we need to outline intended objectives and the route through which we intend to achieve



them. The reason is that it helps us focus our minds towards the attainment of our goal however little or great it is. This steers us from distractions even if they are necessary ones.

We don't have to leave to chance life's opportunities. We need to create a set down written path that guides us. This will reduce wastage.

Impulse may not be all-bad. Planned impulse often would help. How? Expect life's opportunities to vary and change. It helps to plan for such variations. This could mean having extra money in your pocket away from the planned so that when impulse leads you to buy; you know it's from some extra. You could create time for the unexpected so that the unexpected becomes a planned event.

The need for some thought before any action cannot be underestimated. Broadcasters are aware that as much as they may be gifted at speaking, there's so much difference between their having to go through a script before going on air and having to jump on air on getting a script. Even the most professional of them agree.

The fact that we are faced with a rat raced society where everything is done at thought's speed does not mean we are to lose our head and self-control. The pace may be fast and so is the increased accident occurrence. You won't want to be among the statistic of those who hit the road without thinking

first that there are other road users only to discover they have gotten it wrong on the hospital bed.

It pays to settle our future action with credible thought process. Do you want to buy a house? Think. Are you about to marry? Think. Are you thinking of delving into a business? Think. How about the school you intend to attend? Think. Everything you intend to do should be allowed some credible thought process. This will enable you decipher the workability of the projects before you jump at it.

Your thinking does not mean you act insanely or waste precious time. The thinking process should be allowed quality time but not all the time that would require the project to come to limelight. Time is precious.

Some persons may not be cool headed enough to think for themselves before jumping at projects. If you are in such category, it pays to listen to some advice from some other person you can count on. Words of advice are very helpful as they guide your steps if they are the right ones. What this means is that, advice could be right or wrong. Listen and filter.

The results from good gainful thoughts are unprecedented. Companies pay employees just for their ability to think. They hold such employees as assets and never let them go. These companies appreciate that good thinking could increase the

company's earnings as much as bad thinking can bring the earnings down.

Before you jump into making that giant decision, think. Don't make that decision because everybody's doing so. Everybody isn't you. Where everybody's succeeding, you could fail. You are failing because you have not thought through and had a grasp of the secrets that's making others succeed.

Let your modus operandi be "*think now, buy later.*"

# STEPS TO LIVING THE BETTER LIFE

Everyone wants the better of life (best is relative). This better is pictured in the mind's mental screen upon which hope and desire is geared. A part of everyman's wish could be to spend some time holidaying in a five star hotel near the sea away from the bustle and hustle of town or maybe sleep by the side of the beach for as long as he wishes. We wish that mental picture we are painting arrives soonest.

There is always that natural picture of the better life that sticks naturally with a person as he lives life. This picture is often created from the plethora of objects viewed which have been considered as things that are part of persons living better lives. Painting the picture of what is needed in the better life has been made easier that every person has one perfect future picture that he is longing to find himself in. You too have a picture of the better life that you want.

Every desirable better life picture is only a wish that we hope to see happen. Many persons have been able to get into their

picture but most have failed to get into it. The reason is because some lack the vital information that could enable the way for the coming to life of their picture.

What information?

**The Information on what choices they have to make.** Anyone who has to make headway towards the better life must decide to make a choice towards that life. The better life is a choice. One could decide for mediocrity and stay there. Those who decide for the better life make a choice towards it and they make a couple of other choices to remain in their choice better life path.

These choices are often varying depending on what direction the better life is going to arrive from. One may have to choose between getting a higher degree, learning a new trade or business and choosing to remain at the same position where you are. Whatever direction you choose, it's a choice. The only difference is the endpoint.

**Getting Information on the chances available in the direction of choice.** When you've made a choice, on what path you feel you should take, the next thing that must come to mind is the chances available in the direction of that choice. For example if you've chosen a career at the university, you'd be thinking of getting a chance for admission at the university, if it's a

business choice, you'd be thinking of the possibilities of the business succeeding, how to raise capital for the business etc.

**You will have to make some changes.** There is always a need for change somewhere in our lives if there will be any better path to which we must thread. You may have to change your immediate spending habits. Your choice may require that you save more in order to meet the needed capital for the business. You may have to give up some other things you hold dear in order to fund the pursuit of the better life. Sometimes you may even give up your friends and loved ones for a brief moment to focus on the future better.

The demarcation between where you are now and the better you want may be a long dark tunnel or just a thin sheet of paper. If it's a thin sheet of paper, you are one of the lucky ones. If it's a long dark tunnel, it may be difficult and challenging at some point where you may seem hopeless and lost and may query if you actually made the right decision towards the choice of what direction you desire your better life to come from. Most persons we celebrate today whose lives could be similitude with the better life actually had their long tunnel phase but they kept at it till they came at the other side of the tunnel with a new lease of life.

When you've finally achieved the better life, things begin to change at a faster rate than you had imagined. You now

become celebrated because you had dared to make a choice for the life you want.

If you truly want the better life, make the right choices, watch out for the chances and make the changes

# CHOICE: BECOMING A SUCCESS OR BECOMING THE SUCCESS

In today's fast pace rat raced society, we find ourselves in a persistent pursuit for the things that we hope can offer us a better comfortable life than we have being used to. Society has helped us define the characteristics of this more comfortable life like owning a car, building a house and having a successful family with a beautiful wife or handsome husband. Thanks to the media's crave for visualizing beautiful things; we are often fed with this lifestyle on television screens and on movies. The more we see, the stronger our passion to live this lifestyle reveals itself.

Success is a relative term yet everyone tends to define success based on some degree of substantial achievements that one



can see, feel or touch. We have grown up with an assumed mental definition of success and we think if we have to be defined as successful, we must have all the nice things of life. Many persons have found themselves caught in the web of reaching for success and many have failed to attain the height for which they feel success is achieved. The reason is because they had been pursuing the wrong goals. They have the wrong picture of success.

Success like everything in life obeys the Einstein's philosophical rule of relativity which supports the conclusion that everyone is successful. This success is the relative success which at some point we have enjoyed. Everyone has had reasons to go ahead of some other person. You may not be doing well at work but you once did in the classrooms against your classmates. Everyone succeeds.

There is a stratum of success that often everyone pushes to attain. Yes everyone succeeds but what we often look out for is the stand out success, the one that every other person observes, feels and touches. This success division is the one everyone strives to become; to become "a success."

We become "a success" when we meet ranks with other successful people. Often in this rank of success, these persons succeed at creating for themselves a degree of wealth and fame by doing what every other successful person has done.

Often there is no extraordinary exceptional air around their achievements. They do what everyone who they feel is enjoying success does and they get the same result. Success leaves footprints and when you walk in those footprints, you will also become “a success.”

When one becomes “the success”, he carries an extraordinary exceptional uncommon kind of air that can never be replicated no matter how much one tries. This kind of success isn’t gotten by following some other successful person. It is gotten by a divine kind of inspiration, the kind that arrives when you decide to take a path away from every other successful person and then choose to do your thing. This kind of success goes beyond wealth and fame. Wealth and fame comes and it comes in a stupendous form that it becomes almost not valuable but that’s not often the goal. The goal is often to bless and uplift lives.

The kind of success most persons yearn for is the “a success” type, the type in which driving cars, owning houses, having a beautiful family and having a chain of businesses is the goal. This type of success makes people want to do all they can do to attain often because their neighbors or relative has attained that. The man who wants to become “the success” thinks otherwise. Yes he needs all the great things of life but he sees beyond those things. He looks at the overall betterment of human kind and human kind often bestows on such persons

godlike attributes. He doesn't have his neighbors to compete with and even if his neighbors live in mansions and he lives in a hut, he shows a degree of contentment knowing that beyond his present situation is the mansions he is helping others build for which his will arrive soon.

As a matter of fact, the man who becomes "the success" is infinitesimally being looked up to for inspiration. He has millions at his feet who glorify him and have him in prime place in their minds. Everyone thinks becoming like him is impossible and so they never try. They'd rather prefer being the faithful follower who taps from the resources of the almost infinite "the success."

What's your desirable success type?

# CLIMB ON TO THE STAGE OF LIFE

There is a natural instinct in us that craves for that opportunity to be the one all eyes are directed towards. If you think otherwise, you will be lying. No one entirely loves the very quiet life away from others. We find ourselves with the impulse to conquer, to be the one giving the rules and having others watch or marvel at how well we perform. This is the reason why we have quite a number of persons who want to breakthrough to becoming musical superstars or whatever genre of superstar stardom that exist.

As a child, I had always marveled at how my pastor commanded the huge crowd that came to the church services every Sunday. The crowds were always in tens of thousands and up there, my pastor would always stand inspiring them. I was increasingly being enthralled by the influence he had and still has that some day, I promised myself, I'd make as much influence as he has and climb on that stage to inspire people.

I have observed that out of the “everyone” who desire to be celebrated; only a few manage to try to act towards the celebration arena. Yet still, only a minuet makes it to the stage of which just one might be the celebrity. I often marvel at the statistics and pray I don’t get caught up amongst the crowd who think they are worth being celebrated but do not become.

The route to the stage is not always as easy as the superstars out there make it seem. Years of sacrifice and hard-work had gone unnoticed before they managed to find that special attention grabbing opportunity.

There is always the crowd effect that forces us to cower. The crowd thinks they are the crowd and are destined to be spectators. They could pay so much to watch and may be content with watching; never ever thinking others can watch them. A major fact is only those who have being amongst the crowd ever consider taking a leap to the stage.

Breaking off from the crowd could be herculean and it often comes from a deep spirited inspiration. If you aren’t tired of watching, the rush for what life offers at the other side won’t arise.

We often make many friends at the crowd end and its always great moments but those who break through from the crowd aren’t tied to their friends. When they pop the idea of breaking free, their friends often will fuse and muse at the development.

They do not often support the move at first so the man who wants to get to the stage will have to do it all alone.

Making the journey to the stage requires determination. There may not be friends to succor you and it may be tempestuous but you have to push on with your believe. It's like jumping off a moving band wagon of spectators to make a trek. It would be quiet most of the time.

The true test for the man who wants to make the stage his bed is that time of decision to redirect his pursuit from being a follower to being watched, to jump off and set sailing on his new target. It is sometimes traumatic but once the decision is made, you can set sail.

People do not believe in an idea until you decide to do it all alone and they discover you are making some progress. This progress arrives after you have made this silent path and you find others too who are taking this path too or have taken this path and you decide to collaborate or share ideas. Ideas from those who come around you while pursuing your goal could be very helpful. You don't have to make the mistakes others have made.

The stage often takes as many people who will believe the visionary and act in the line of his thought. When you work with a man with vision, it's only a matter of time before you also join him at the stage sharing the limelight, even though you aren't

the focus. If you prove you are as good as the focus, you'd be privileged to someday become a focus too.

You sure want to be the focus, the one to whom every one bows, whose lyrics everyone's singing, whose dance step is the rave. It's there at the stage. Just head there.

# COMING SOON

You have been around the site of an ongoing shopping mall project. At the front of the site, you might have noticed the billboard that carries the completed version of the building, which is still under construction with the phrase “coming soon,” tagged on it.

The architect concludes the building plan with the 3D picture of the building having people already walking on its streets and cars parked on its car park, a representation of the expectation of the owner in a few months or years.

You are an ongoing project already completed by the Maker God. You may wonder when time will arrive for you to reach the attainment of the future already designed. One fact is you are coming soon. You have been fashioned for Glory and molded with Grace right from the beginning.

You may seem far away from your desirable future design now. This is because you are undertaking the building process. Even though your future state is certain as in the 3D picture of the building, the builders still have to go at building.



The builders work with a plan. The Master Builder has set out his plan for you to achieve. He sticks with his plan as long as you choose to remain the mortar and bricks.

He firstly sets out the foundation. He knows the height he wants you to attain and only the right foundation would fit his building. He will not be planning a skyscraper on a slim foundation. It will fail. He is digging deep into the ground of life and positioning you where you have to be to rise to great heights.

Block by block, your building rises. Every block is each day's experience. A solid building does not appear just immediately the builder begins to build. Every day, we learn, and what we learn add up to the totality of knowledge we will be having in the future. As each block adds to another, you add knowledge to what you already know and finally hit the right height with the builder sticking to his plan as tentative as possible. He does not want to make a mistake of you so he has to perfect the work.

When a building reaches the right height, the builder gets a roof for it. The roof is a representation of his protection. Through the building process, you have learnt to live with the battering of the rain and the heating from the sun. However, it's never going to last forever. The time arrives when you get the security and protective covering that comes with being at

the highest cadre of life. At this point, you are immune to the battering of life that had once characterized you.

A roofed building signals the building has reached the final height, for which the builder planned. However, the fact that a building has roof does not mean the building is complete. The building will have to undergo the fining process. The walls have to be glazed, the floor has to be tiled, electric fittings have to be fixed, doors and windows have to be positioned etc., to enable the building look nice.

God fine-tunes you and creates the aura of beauty around you. He has nurtured you all the way from foundation to the height you are now. He will not want to see his work lose value. He thus provides you with everything that is necessary to make you attractive.

As your building reaches the final lap, the now letting signal hits the market. Interested persons begin to court the building. As you reach towards attainment state, people begin to court your attention. They begin to see possibilities that will come in their interaction with you. You also begin to court people to whom you can render your services.

Finally, the building is completed and the tenants have taken their slots, the car parks now park in their parking lot and the building now look as was depicted in the 3D picture at the beginning of the building process. This is the point when you

get acclaim as being an achiever having attained your purpose for living.

Whatever you may be going through now, keep the big picture “coming soon.” It is only a matter of time before you see the fruition of the big picture.

# CRITICS ISMs

No one loves criticisms. We love to find ourselves on the good books of our friends, family, fellow workers, or fans. The possibility of these though is slim. One way or the other, you will find some person who thinks the best you are putting isn't good enough.

A friend of mine was in charge of a team of young persons. As a leader, it was great work as leaders often face. Leaders have to put themselves down for the good benefit of the whole. My friend did just that. He read all the leadership handouts and text and tried improving where he was lacking. He was burning out and terribly degrading trying to see through the projects of the team. He seemed to enjoy the work and he was making headway. He was expecting encouragement but what he got was a fuss, a sigh and words downgrading his achievements. He came running to me. I smiled and said, well bro you should expect that.

There is no standard yardstick for measuring human performance. As much as we exist in life, we obey the law of relativity. What is considered a high standard for some person may be a low standard for another.

Critics must exist. Some persons are more learned than others. These persons have garnered experience, which puts them in position as judges to critic some other person's work. These judges often expect others to come to their very high standard but they fail to realize that their high standard did not come in a day. It took years of training, one the other persons may not be opportune to have.

Some persons make it a habit to criticize whether or not they have an idea what is being done. These persons pose as busy bodies poking their heads unnecessarily into issues without having had the requisite knowledge to give sound judgment. They complain but can't give solution to the problem.

Some persons use criticisms as publicity stunt. They strive to attract attention to themselves by criticizing government on media platforms. They often escalate faults and seize on that to attract public sympathy.

For those whose public status is slowly waning, they pay for criticisms. They act out the scene as being the ideal and others, the critics, thus attracting empathy from the public.

Criticisms though is great when it's done in the right light like when a lecturer critic the examination script of his students or when someone finds a hole in a project that has been considered error proof and brings it to the knowledge of the examiners. Criticism is great when you observe, critic and offer

solutions or positive additions. Criticism done in humility often gain attention and consideration even when no one heralds them than the big mouthed friends who only makes noise.

When we are criticized, we have to learn to accept them however way they come. They may sound like some nonsense from some attention seeking folk but listen again and you will find some sense in the criticism.

Rather than raise our voice in anger and suspicion, we should accept the criticism and see how to build ourselves to cover the holes that our critics have used against us.

One certain fact is that critics do often have an idea even if they do not have all. They may seem blind but they have hindsight one they use to their advantage.

When you do want to test the success of your project and its flaws, your critics can be your source of results. Spy them and get what they are saying. They are certainly saying something. Pinpoint their observations and go about solving them.

However way we see critics and their ism's, we need them.

# DON'T LEAVE IT IDLE.....

“Don’t leave it idle...” The scientific laureate credited with this statement, the relativity theory and a host of other creations in the wake of his theory was just another man. While some had thought he was a phenomenon, he declared his mortality in his ability to create from his well of resource, his talents. This man is Albert Einstein. Albert Einstein was no scientist or acute philosopher as his contemporaries were but he discovered he had a rare gift right inside him. The ability to think was a special talent and he used it to get acclaim and fame.

Like Albert, inside everyone is a talent or skill. It carries a natural impulse, an ease that reveals itself in our relationship with nature. It’s a distinct attribute that is often overlooked but which has the capacity to pedestal us into uncommon heights. Often these talents lie there latent waiting to be triggered. It’s like a massive gun with magazines of bullets. The gun may be catastrophic, capable of doing harm but it doesn’t until the trigger is pressed. The gun may have capacity, but its capacity has to be acknowledged and applied for it to be effective.

Our talent is developed from our relationship with our immediate environment. We discover this capacity as we deal

with our society and interact naturally with it. While our society supports forced focused learning process where the sources of inspiration for the achievement of academic goals is money that will come at the end of the study, talent has been placed on the sideline, sometimes crushed and made worthless. In the face of this battle that has engulfed the human race; more and more people are discovering and rediscovering the potent capacity in what they have inside them, their talent.

The development of talent is often painted in a dark light because of the seeming importance of the conventional academic system. However, those who have dared to find use for their talent often have good words to share at the end of their travail. A barrier to developing talent is often the uncertainty about the capacity of the talent to get results and the fear that our talents can't give what the conventional academic system supplies, that assurance.

However, those who have gone ahead to apply their talent often evoke sweet tales of affluence and importance that the average brilliant academic scholar strives to get. It doesn't come on a platter though. It requires some hard work but a joyful one. While the man who pursues talent may seem odd at first, his pursuit to achieve pays off in the sudden growth and influence that erupts from almost nothing but what is inside him.



While our academic system may assure a future based on the ability to have certificates and get favors from CEOs who often have developed talent, a man who discovers his talents only has himself to challenge, i.e. his fears. Once he is able to outdo his fears, what he gets is a stream of possibilities.

Who are the famous persons on earth? Who are the richest persons on earth? They are not academic gurus, professors, laureates or researchers. No. they are men who discovered they had more in them than their academic certificates could offer. They are business people, musicians, sports men, religious men etc. Some of them were even considered unfit for the academic world. However, talent doesn't care about what and how people think about us. All it cares about is getting people to see us in a brilliant light.

The man who discovers his talent is often looked upon in awe by even the smartest and educated of men. They get crowds paying to watch them, earn much for little work, sign autographs, write books and influence people, a feat even the finest of professors find phenomenal.

The finest of professors may not be opportune to speak to a crowd greater than five thousand over their life time, but a pastor gets that in one service and if he runs a crusade, he could have times twenty that number in one night. The musician gets a crowd of over one hundred thousand in one

show, a writer may have over a million book sales, an actor's movie may get over a hundred million views, a poet may have the world sharing his poems, the dancer may have the world dancing to his style of dance, a singer may have the continent singing to his song, the sportsman often plays before a large crowd. It seems certain that talent seems to be a key that opens fame and renown.

It isn't that the academic system where certificates and academic laurels are pursued in rapid speed is wrong in the whole sense. Its fine, but those who often get more from life find a way around their talent; I mean those who really want to be happy.

Discover your talent; you could be the next superstar.

# DON'T BE EVERYBODY ELSE.

Larry Ellison, founder of Oracle is credited with this statement; if you do everything that everyone else does in business, you are going to lose. The only way to really be ahead is to be different.

Our world is filled with everybody else doing what is common to everybody else. Everybody is the crowd thinking system, a general school of thought that kills individualism. It steers the individual away from discovering and applying his innate potentials and moves him to hiding under the shadows of the belief of the group to which he belongs. It blinds the eyes to the huge capacity embedded in each person by focusing more on the strength of the collective whole. The power of "everybody" is its swaying capacity that keeps you in its path even when you can do more than the capacity that it celebrates.

It is a general illusion to think the way everyone does. Many a child faces this challenge everyday amongst their peers. At a particular age, society expects some certain attributes from a

child. As the child grows, he struggles to meet up with the demands of society. That consciousness of being what society demands envelopes the child that he begins to look up to society for his sense of direction, one the society finds magnanimous to supply, however society supplies a bias direction.

Societal everybody principles are skewed towards the partial development of each constituent person. It does not allow for the full actualization or pursuance of independent potentials. Everybody works towards the pursuance of generalized goals and you only need to apply a little of you to be useful.

Everybody may deride you for your seeming incapacity to achieve a task considered to be within the privy of everyone. They expect that you must live up to their own billing even if you have your own bills to pay. They poke you at every turn because they take position as the judge for your every action. Even when you are absolutely capable to take your independent step, everybody thinks you are breaking a coded rule.

Those who stand out are those who choose to quip from the claws of everybody. Yes, we need somebody and a few persons but we can't afford to need everybody. The difference each person has to make cannot be felt if each person tows in the line of the crowd. The distortion that characterizes the

bandwagon effect of everybody is its huge limitation it places. It is like a heavy load, a huge burden that has to be borne. You can't go far with the type of speed you'd like to when you are carrying a big load on that back.

Those who go far, drop the burden of everybody, ease themselves off and set sail towards a different definite path. Everyone may be watching news by 9pm; they are studying their books. Everyone may be snoring at 1am; they are awake researching. Everyone may be at the weekly Friday night party; they are busy on a business model. Everyone may be spending their financial resources on wears and cars; they are sending them to the orphanages.

Taking the decision to pull off from the crowd isn't always a celebrated action. But for those who can dare, it's the most worthwhile action. You must be ready to defend your action over and over again. The truth is, no one in the crowd will consider your action as right. You will be considered selfish, self-centered and not right thinking. In any case, it's the right action for you.

The path away from everybody will be lonely especially at the initial period of your jumping off the crowd bandwagon. You will have to battle it out all by yourself to fruition before any chance of getting any support comes. People only get to support those who act against the crowd only after they have

proved that their journey against the crowd was indeed a worthwhile venture.

Only those who think away from everybody do phenomenal acts. You can only affect the crowd by being against it. You can't be celebrated in the crowd. As much as everybody is concerned, your place is to watch along. Only those who choose to watch away from everybody get the chance to also have everybody watching them.

Those we find on the big stages of life; our musical icons, actors, authors, laureates, MCs etc., are the ones who have taken the decision to go against the thoughts of everybody.

If you truly want to be celebrated, reconsider your direction. You just will have to tread a different path from everybody.

# DON'T FAIL TO FAIL

As a young man trying to cut my teeth in business, I had assumed that the road would be rosy all the way. During my university days, my course mates and I had the premonition that the world outside the university was filled with diamonds and all we had to do was go pick them. We discussed gloriously about the opportunities we expected to arrive and we were filled with so much hope. It turned out however that the beats of life doesn't flow the way every one of us assumed it would and we each found our way with our first major failure, our first major setback, not getting a job after school.

I had suffered from depression having failed to find something to get busy with immediately after school and I checked out with many of my colleagues. Some of them were in worst situations than I was and it was not easy. I began however to find my way around what I could do to help get past my failure. I observed some of my colleagues too who were getting past their immediate failures and I decided I wouldn't be left out from the immediate success stories. I needed to do something immediately.

My failure to get a job helped me rediscover self. I discovered I could do lots more than my immediate academic preoccupation so I set out at developing my talents. I began to write about my experiences and about life with my writing talent and then I began a school with my teaching talent. I've actually failed since then in almost everything I've tried to do but I just keep getting better with each failure

We are often afraid of failure. We have grown with that mentality that failure is bad so we crunch and get depressed when we fail. We feel that the road to success must be smooth with all the great expectations coming through at the end of it. However, success only arrives after failure. There cannot be a chance of success if there is no chance of failure.

Failure is a propellant for success. There is chance that if one persists beyond today's failure and one allows failure push him, the other side called success will arrive. Only men of mediocrity accept their failures as the last bus stop of their journey in life. Failure helps us develop important virtues that success actually requires. Because success is absolutely dependent on failure, failure helps us build the courage to succeed. The list is endless of successes that have arrived beyond the barriers of failures. You also have your personal success stories that are propelled by your past failures if you look through your story line.



Our world is what it is today is because people failed and have continued to fail. Failure helps create solutions to problems in life. Failure of our roads have resulted in the design and creation of better roads, failure of our education system has resulted in better improved education, failure of our health institutions and systems have resulted in better healthcare delivery. Better only arrives from failures.

The brains behind many of the inventions we enjoy today were brains that had to fail to discover a better way of developing inventions that solves human problems. Edison's electric bulb, Karl's automobile, the Wright brother's air plane, Diesels diesel engine and every other human invention arrived because failure provided a need for a solution and the process for the provision of solutions required another set of failures for a correct solution to arrive.

We often find out that when success arrives, it arrives with a new set of failures. These failures were often unanticipated at the arrival of the initial success. This is why we get improvements and remodeling of initial inventions to cater for the arriving failures. The planes the Wright brothers designed is not the plane we use today. There have being series of changes and additions to provide for the new failures observed after the brothers succeed with their flying machines.

Are you failing? Patiently get around your failures. Success is hanging around the corner waiting and something better will always arrive after a series of failure. If you are failing, it is no problem. Just fail on, somewhere along the way, the right failure will arrive for the right solution. Please don't fail to fail.

# DRIVING TO A TOWN CALLED YESTERDAY

I may not be a great traveller, but when I do choose to travel, I could travel any distance. I only travel to “future” but this time was different, I had to journey to the town called yesterday.

I had walked a long distance to get to the center of a green park in my city. As I sat down on the molded seats under one of the huts that characterized the park environment, I was hit by the sudden blow of yesterday. My eyes steered at some young kids who were busy at the fun machines that dotted the park. As I watched those little ones, I reminisced time when I would have jumped on those machines. Now it would be odd jumping on them. I’m grown

You might have had one of such dotting mind travels. The words “I wish” come through your vocals. You wish you could go back to when you were a child and repeat the same games you played. You still wish the skipping ropes could go rolling over your head and the street ball games could continue as you run feverishly under the heat of the sun.

Remember those days of playing squares or hitting nails, carrying toy babies or flying paper airplanes, jumping on mummy's back or sitting on daddy's neck, playing the mummy daddy game or keeping a large collection of wallpapers of famous heroes. Now you are grown.

If you had an opportunity to go back to yesterday, to that time when you were a kid, what would you love to do again? Lionel Richie gave his own answer as "if I could turn back the hands of time, I would like to dance with my father again."

Pondering over how much has changed, I remember praying along with my peers that we should grow up fast become fathers and mothers and create the change we want. We have grown, some of us have married, others are hoping, and then it hits us that we have missed something. Yes, we have missed something. We no longer can play the hide and seek games, listen to tales by moonlight. We are no longer thrilled with Barney and friends, Superman, Spiderman, Robocop, and all the frills that caught our fancy those little days.

What happened to our soccer gods, the ones we idolized when we were young? Where are the Jayjays, the Olisehs, the Kanus, the Bechams, the Zidanes, the Ronaldos, the Robertos, the Figos of the football world? These were men we idolized whose shirt numbers we made claim to on the back of our school

seats. You are iconic if compared to those famous ones in style of play. Their time is long gone.

When you listen to the giggle of a child, you wish you could giggle along. But you are so encumbered with thoughts of “how do I survive?” You seem dazed by tomorrow’s needs, things that were not part of life those growing years.

As we grow older, we begin to desire to grow younger. We want to return to yesterday and lay there for as long as we can. Ladies want baby looking skins that will make them look under eighteen forever. Men want to be forever young. It is a great desire that falls in the “I wish” class. It is impossible. We will give way somehow whether willingly or unwillingly to the cold hands of ageing.

Here is a thought that pricked my heart as I pondered on having an opportunity to get on the merry go round in the park without being considered too young. Having a child with me was the answer.

If I had a child, I would have taken him or her to the park and then say honey let us play on the merry go round. I would be returning to childhood playing football with my son, skipping with my daughter, running the bag race with my children and having us play the football console. I would not have looked odd because I was doing it with someone who has a right to it. I would be considered a great dad

Your children could give you the yesterday you want to have if you choose to make their today better than what you had.

# ASK FOR MORE

When I was a little boy, children had this notion that asking for more was greed. When an adult offered biscuits or anything, however sweet it was, we couldn't ask for more. We accepted contentment as being the rule even when we wanted what was in the offering. We would wait for the adult to leave and then go about from peer to peer asking for what our peers too were not satisfied of. If any one of us managed to bolster courage to ask, we gnarled at him as being selfish in the presence of that adult but celebrated his tenacity and courage behind the adult.

I've observed that same attribute has grown with us. Today's adults are afraid of asking for more. We overly assume contentment as the standard but right inside us there is that un-quenching desire for more that assumes a parallel role with our drive for contentment. We tend not to know the difference between contentment and satisfaction. We assume that we cannot and should not be overly optimistic about the huge possibilities that are possible when we ask for some more than what is offered us. We seem unaware it is our place to have so much and be satisfied.

Whether one likes it or not, there comes a time in our lives when we get overly tired with where we are or what we have now. Our minds are subject to passions of change, because life changes. We think we need more than we are getting and maybe have to strive to get that more that we deserve. It is normal to feel this way. This thinking pattern is the inertia for doing more and getting more from life. Life wouldn't give you anything if you don't desire that something.

In life, everything is available. Life is a spring of endless possibilities only to a man who taps from that spring. There could be a spring out there with so much water but it requires the man who is desirous to go and drink from the resources. How much you drink from it is dependent on your desire and thirst. You may decide all you need is just to quench your present thirst or to keep some for the future too.

Don't feel bad about your changing desire. It's got to happen and that's why we are in life. You certainly need something more than what you are having and you need that more every other time. This is what keeps life interesting.

Some persons may realize they need more but they feel encumbered asking. The want more life is dependent on your ability to ask and demand that more. You need to ask for that more. If you think you are worth an increase at your company, ask. If you feel you are not getting full value for your services,



ask. If you think you expect more of yourself than you are getting from yourself, you can ask yourself too. When we ask, we receive.

Getting more is a paradigm shift from contentment. This does not mean you can't be content but those who stay at contentment level do not develop the drive to achieve. They are the ones, who think others are making more through negative means. They choose rather to bear the pain of living in mediocrity in the name of contentment than breaking all the barriers to living the much more life. They silently curse behind the boss and pretend to be all nice before him. The reason is because they feel handicapped asking for more of what they should get.

You have the right to the more you want. No one has a right to what you deserve except you allow them. It wouldn't take so much more than just daring a bit however scary you feel about that person.

Your resoluteness at getting more of what you want can help define if you will actually get it or not. We may not get all that we ask at the first time asking. We have to persist until we get what we want.

There's always that sense of satisfaction that fills our heart when we get that more that we want. Imagine how happy you would feel if your boss gives you a wage increase.

When you get more of what you want, you will certainly feel happy and satisfied.

You deserve that more that you want. Go get it.

# FACE YOUR PHASE

You will remember vividly that time when you were little and the teacher at school threw the question “what do you want to be in the future?” at you. You replied with “I want to be .....” You have gone through that time of answering such questions to becoming the answer that you had offered back then. For some, life managed to push them away from what they had assumed was their right answer back then.

Life is in phases. A phase is a stage or chapter of life. That time when you were little was a phase. You could only think and want to be. Beyond mere words, there was nothing more that could have created the image of what the future entailed. Though the period consisted of its challenges, it was challenges within your capacity.

We often prayed for challenges to get off our back that time when we were little and we had huge success getting them off but you might have observed that each challenge that got off our backs opened a door to even more challenges.

Every phase carries its set of challenges. The close of a challenge welcomes us to the opening of another phase and

another challenge. You may remember that you anticipated getting off the phase of primary school into high school. It was so interesting a new phase that you wanted to jump in almost immediately without even getting through the immediate challenge of finishing primary school. There was always the anticipation and you prayed the next day was the day you jumped into high school but you failed to acknowledge the price that is required to get through the challenge.

There is a rush to get over towards something new every time. We want to be ahead faster than our capacity to challenge in the new phase we are yearning for. We naturally have that tendency to hurry along in the race of life but then we observe each point on the race is a mountain that has to be surmounted, a test that has to be resolved. We observe that the race is sectionalized, each section with its own set of rules, rules that guide all the affairs of that section.

Where you are now is a phase of your life. It may be challenging or easy going but it's just a phase. A phase can offer just about anything and everything. Sometimes we envy some other person because we aren't at the same position as they are. We wish we have the car, the home, the family or the job of the man next door. Sadly though, we are wrong to think that way. It's good to desire something good not because a friend has it but because it is good. However if you don't have it,

acknowledge too that once upon a time, that friend that has what he has now never had. He got through the same phase as you have to go through, faced the challenges and headed out successfully. You can learn how he got off his phase and maybe follow his steps too.

The rush life has caused many to take the wrong decisions about their lives because they want to break away from the challenging phase they are in. a better phase may be increasingly enticing especially when one looks at the characteristics of the life one could live. Those who however get there must sacrifice.

The easy route to a better phase may pay faster but has deadly repercussions. The easy route may involve bribing, robbery, cheating, lying, cultism etc. yes, it may seem to get you the better lifestyle faster, but the result can be damning.

If you are facing a challenging phase, you'd be better off learning from the challenges of the phase than jumping off the challenges through some short route. Every challenge comes with something to learn, virtues to imbibe that will make you a better person than you were before the challenge. Face the challenges that rise from your phase with all the energy that it requires.

Those you think are doing better and which you desire to be like also have challenges that they have to challenge within

their phase. They got through similar challenges like yours when they were in your phase and have qualified for the quality of life of their phase and the new set of challenges which you may not notice because you aren't in their phase.

Whatever phase you may be in, just face it.

# FIDELITY TO A WORTHY PURPOSE

Knowing you have a worthy purpose for living could be most satisfying. God made everyone to fit his purpose and he handed down to us varying purpose full task to accomplish, each task in a special way having a positive effect on humanity.

Though each person is laden with a given God ordained purpose, our inadequacies have helped us replace God's purpose with frivolities that we have become blind to the set purpose we are meant to achieve. We now find ourselves pursuing junks as purpose.

Knowing your worthy purpose could be challenging especially because it requires the development of the mind towards the attainment of the spiritual good, a state when God shines his light of inspiration and guidance to you. However, once you focus your mind towards God and he illumines your mind, he directs you to his perfect will and he reveals his purpose for your life in a full rush of illumination.

Discovering your purpose in life is one thing and having a resolute fidelity to pursue that purpose is another. Your purpose is like an automobile, which the oil of fidelity and dedication has to fuel. If you do not pursue your purpose and confirm it with your colors painted all over it, it could leave for frivolities.

Our world is frivolities filled and the greatest mistake we will be making is leaving our purpose one bit to pursue them. While this may be a big mistake, many still choose to make that mistake. The lives in our penitentiaries all have worthy purposes but they allowed frivolities ahead of their purpose.

Imagine how the world would have been if everyone discovered, their worthy purpose and pursued them. It would have being a blissful world with each person thinking how best to serve the other.

Our earth remains the way it is because either the bulk of its inhabitants have failed to recognize their purpose or if they recognized their purpose, they have failed to pursue that purpose.

Do you want to be a statistic, a number of persons who have lost sight of their God ordained worthy purpose? You don't. You want to live a fulfilled purpose full life.



Get to know your purpose. When you've known your purpose, what happens next? Pursue the purpose. Stick to it and make that purpose speak. Hold strongly to that purpose and believe in its fulfillment. That's fidelity.

You have a responsibility to fight for your worthy course and to ensure it sees day's light. The satisfaction you desire to get in living a life of purpose will not come over a night sleep. You will have to strive to put in some believe and hope into the purpose.

Sometimes your worthy purpose could stand in opposition to laid down conventions and principles. This may make you fret when you meet these oppositions. Regardless of the opposition, you must hold firm to your purpose.

One fact you must realize is that people who live with a purpose often have to face initial opposition and so much of it. The world loves conventions and when you drive against convention, there surely will be an outcry. However if you persist, yours too soon will become a convention with people seeing through your own lens.

All great achievements are the results of the fidelity of achievers with purpose who defied odds to see through why God had created them.

It is satisfying having gone through the trial period and making headway with your worthy purpose. Life becomes easy. Here's why you hear people say their works like their play. Their work is their play because it is what they are meant to do as purpose. They are living a comfortable life because they have derived pleasure from the purpose God has given them.

Running against your purpose is suicidal. It leaves you empty and without joy and could finally lead you to taking unnecessary actions that could destroy the purpose altogether.

Your purpose counts. You pursuing that worthy cause you have been purposed for may determine the difference we will be seeing in the future. You being true to your purpose could propel some other persons fulfillment.

Live a purpose full life. It's only a matter of time before your pose becomes the standard.

# FIGHT TO YOUR LAST BREATH

The last one month has been challenging for me especially because of a health challenged little sibling. I needed to hang around to help her through her challenge until she came through it. I realized during the period that as much as I could, it was difficult holding balance in the face of seeing a loving little sibling battle for her life. In the face of it though, I managed to garner enough motivation to help her believe. I've learnt over and over again that at the juncture when we find ourselves between life and death, we are often left with a ludicrous choice, a voice that tells us this side of life isn't worth living in after-all.

The total essence of our existence in life is centered on a struggle to survive. We do all we do in life just so that our eyes could still be open to this side of life where it seems we have the ability to control because we have no idea what life at the other side looks like. This wrangling thought is what propels us to do all we can do, how we can do it and when we can do it to ensure we get off the sickbed straight into life.

Getting success is like fighting for life at the sick bed. Failure is like death, an easier but bitter option that leaves not just you but others around you sad and despondent. Success arrives as life filled with inspiration for even more life. It however takes a struggle to defeat the many encumbrances that often form themselves around the man who is gunning for it.

One would have to defeat self. A major reality that my eyes opened to was the fact that our first enemy that has to be defeated before we can take congruent steps towards getting success is actually ourselves. We often think our major enemies are others. Actually others arrive only when they see you have lost it with yourself. We have to learn to deal with ourselves first. Self may not be comfortable but we have to learn to put it under us, have it controlled and submitted to our own will. This means that if you want to succeed, your self will have to align to your quest for success too.

Next, you will have to choose others. You choose, not accepting just anyone that comes. Everyone has something to offer but not everything being offered is what you need. There is much information and advice out there but the one you need has to be sieved for relevance. So many persons have succeeded but not necessarily the same path you are taking. They may have one or two words to share with you which may or may not be relevant with your path of success. The onus is on you to

choose which one best suite the path through which your success will be arriving from. This is because, success is varied. There are different professions and trades which success can arrive from.

Once you are able to defeat yourself and get the right people and information around you, you act. Acting on your belief and having people around you to encourage you in the direction of the acted belief is propelling towards that success you want to attain. It's interesting when you believe you can and those around you also think in your direction. It eases you especially because you will have the right hands and very encouraging ones to fall to in a situation of failing. We can't remove the possibility of some draw backs.

We cannot achieve success without acting towards it. We must develop a fighting spirit like a man who is determined to fight for his life. Concentrate on fighting on till that success is achieved even if it means we are close to our last breath. Success requires strong effort, the kind that never gives up even when it's almost over. Success always finds a way to arrive from around the corner just at that nick of time when you refuse to let go.

Push! Push!! Push!!! Don't stop just now because there seems to be no headway over this long pursuit. At that last breath, you would experience a turnaround.

# FROM APRIL FOOL TO APRIL FULL

I recall those little years when April fool really mattered. I and my friends would prepare our list of scenes that we were going to play out on unsuspecting colleagues and pray our colleagues got caught in our web. If they fell through, we'd yell "April fool", but if not, we'd walk away disappointed and try again.

It's April already, and foolhardiness rents the air. Someone around the corner is about to play you an "April fool." Perhaps you have been treated to one of those hilarious gigs already. If you have fallen for one, don't feel bad.

There comes a time in everyone's life when there is high chance you may fall prey of unsuspecting circumstances like the "April fool in April". Seasons come, seasons go and foolhardy April soon will be gone with all its memories. What matters during periods of unsuspecting circumstance isn't the negatives that often play out itself, but the positives that also arrive cloaked in the negatives. The man who has been April fooled may soon discover that he has just been made April full.

There is always a hidden benefit behind any bad situation. We often think that bad situations that arrive around us are all bad and meant to hurt us. We quake and curse at the man or woman who has caused us the bad situation and hope the situation gets away fast. A lady may say “oh, he fooled me” to her cheating fiancé and rain curses on him. The fiancé might have fooled her but she would fail to realize that there is some benefit in her discovery that she had being cheated if she continually looks at the negative side of his cheating. She might have assumed he was the right choice until her discovery. That discovery could change her game and maybe help her redirect her search towards some other serious man.

Negative moments are game changing moments. There is always a lesson in every situation that fails to walk out as planned. Maybe you have decided to step into a business and you got duped before the business got started. It's never easy going through the harrowing experience of losing money that would have been useful for your venture. Look again, you've learnt something new and perhaps you've become more experienced than you were before you started off. You will jump into the business next time with a bit more caution required of the business than you had shown.

Being fooled could be hilarious to the person who is doing the fooling but to the fooled, it isn't always funny. Sometimes

though, it could be funny to both sides. That is when the fooled accepts that he has been fooled and considers the situation as a prank he has fallen into. It's often a lightening atmosphere when one accepts that he has been fooled, accepts the defeat and goes on with life with the lesson learnt.

If you've gone through any bad experience, it pays to accept the experience as part of life, learn from the experience.

Whatever happens to us is meant to build us into better life agents. You may be in a position someday to give a word or two to people who are about to make decisions that you had made and failed. Your words will come in as salt to steer their minds.

Every circumstance in life that we experience makes us one more knowledge full. It makes us able teachers packed with resources that some other person might not have had.

Negative experiences build us up with the necessary courage to face life and to help people challenge life too. If you've not experienced it, you've not learnt it

No positive circumstance is all good. If you continue to win every day, when losing comes, you may not be able to contend with it. That's why those who fall from grace and wealth often choose to commit suicide than face the challenge of leaving a lower life than they had been used to.

Develop a brave attitude to challenge life whatever arrives through the process. Stand and fight, accept the loss if it



happens, learn the lessons for the loss and get ahead with life.  
No person ever becomes full if he hasn't had a reason to be  
fooled.

# TIME FOR CHANGE: NOW OR LATER.

You might have heard people talk about waiting patiently for God's time. Every religion tends to portray God's time in a future sense. It is common to hear people say "God will do it in his time" or "I'm waiting upon God to help me". We often neglect the possibilities of "now" and throw our hands up to the future waiting for a supernatural help and remaining in the same position.

Even amongst people of little or no spiritual attributes, there is a strong tendency towards waiting. Everyone tends to look at the future in hope. Our strong allegiance and reference to God while it is a great attribute, has blinded our eyes to possibilities that are part of everyday life.

It isn't wrong to hope. Hope is a great attribute. It helps us feed the future with so much to do. However, our weak characteristics now allow for mediocrity. Rather than work towards achieving our goals and dreams, we leave them to hope and God's time.

It is saddening to note that our generation is increasingly failing to act even when acting is very possible. Because we push the present to the future, the kind of change that has to happen now eludes us. We have strong spirituality when what we are suffering from is laziness and mediocrity.

The kind of future we want is the measure of the present we act. Our faith in God is a present faith not a future one. Our tenacious believe is not a future one, It is one which has capacity for a present impact. What this means is that while we pray so hard in expectation of the better life, the better life is us acting in the present too.

Every one anticipates change, most of all positive change. Your present state may not be the best state yet and you see it changing in the right time. Well, the good news is, the right time is when you choose to make of it.

“Now” has the capacity to enforce the expected. God’s time is when you are ready. It’s the time you accept to act in the direction of the change you desire. Think of a student who has the desire to turn his failure woes while sitting at the bottom of the class, to the number one student in class. That’s a whole lot of change. He can pray and hope on God but he will have to act in the direction of his goal by studying as a student who wants to be top of the class. He would have to watch what the top students are doing and do same.

Practically, our capacity to pray may give us spiritual insight and direction but it all falls on us acting in the direction of our prayers, else we may only have hope of a better future or situation but never reaching there.

You might have heard of very spiritual students who were very hopeful of attaining a goal but fell short of it because they slept after their prayers when they should have been working. It turns out that when they fail, they blame it on God. They are wrong. They were only mediocre.

The bridge between what we want and the present time is “act now.” It will be foolhardy to think that what we want will automatically come in the right time. You can choose to wait in anticipation of the time but the time may just come and pass you by. It is when you act presently and continuously that the time arrives to bring your actions to limelight.

Many a musical icon would tell you they had always pictured themselves as icons in their dreams. Some of them became celebrities only after years of churning out series of albums that had gone unnoticed. They were not sleeping on their musical talent. They kept at their songs till time caught up with them in the studio singing.

So now, you can hope for big things, hope for special things, hope for great things but they won't come automatic however hard you believe in God. They will come when you act with your

believe. They come when you accept that what you want can be gotten now and you act in such a manner as to get it now.

The time for change is your choice too. It's not left to God or some spiritual force. It's the two working at par.

# GOLD IS EVERYONE'S GOAL

The Olympics is a very important game festival worldwide in which every team prepares to win. Every country aims towards a large gold haul. Participating athletes understand the magnitude of the occasion. They prepare so hard in anticipation of the event. Their goal is gold. The huge task of the competition often takes the athletes months of preparation, undertaking exercises, trainings and eating right. The reason is that they have to be fit.

What's your competition? You have a competition in life that you are having to challenge. The hassles of life are every day competitions that you have to come against. Like athletes, you do also have to prepare to face these hassles.

How do you prepare? Life's learning ground is so huge with lessons every step of the way. These lessons are meant to build you into a better athlete and prepare you for future challenges. At the beginning of life's challenge, it often seems a great hurdle to climb. Think of the difficulty of running a 400 meters

distance for the first time. Your body saps energy before you reach the 200 meters mark, but the more you run the distance, the faster you become and the easier the race to cover the distance becomes.

In life, the more you persist, the easier you get over your challenges. Be ready to face challenges. Every challenge you face are steppingstones to future glory. By keeping your gait tied to the goal with determination, persistence, and diligence, you soon discover your difficult hurdles becoming easy meat.

Think life as a competition and you'd have good reason to be up and doing. That's what athletes do. They come to the games with the competitive mindset. They are there to challenge. For them, every other athlete is an adversary that has to succumb to their prowess. They acknowledge that the only proof of their superior ability is only when they challenge other athletes in competitions. You too are absolutely gifted but the only proof is if you get up there against those who are as gifted as you are. You may be a self-acclaim champion but that's not enough. Boost your confidence by challenging others who you acknowledge are as talented as you are.

Looking at the medals table of any athletic event, you would observe the importance placed on gold. A team may have just two gold medals and another may have one gold and ten silver medals making a total of eleven medals but the team with two

gold medals is considered higher in rankings than the latter. Have you ever asked why? The reason is the gold value. If its not gold, it cannot be gold. One gold is more superior to 1000 silvers. The value placed on gold helps for focus. The organizers of these events put the grand value on Gold because they want the athletes putting all their best in pursuit of it. the life lesson here is that you have to set your eyes on the grand prize of excellence. Only excellence is considered valuable. You could be good, very good, but the desirable quality is excellence.

Records are created in competitions as this one. Some athletes create world records, some continental records, others national records and some still personal best records. What record are you creating? Attaining excellence is great but doing it in a sensational style could be very inspiring like creating a record. Push to break every known standard and create your standard. Do everything you do with a standard creating mindset. You will often find others pushing behind you.

The number of medals individuals are able to accrue measures the overall success of a team. An athlete only counts for his team when he has a medal for his efforts. Those who are counted in companies or institutions are those whose inputs are clearly seen. They are the ones who get the company's best staff award, are trained and promoted. They are the company's



assets. You must strive to be a heralded voice that counts where you are.

Finally, the countries who stay up are those who have had higher gold tally. They are ranked from number one to the last. Those whose athletes have been impressive stand top of the cadre while those whose athletes have performed lackluster stay far at the end. Which position are you aiming for? Is it the topmost position or the last on the list? The choice is yours.

Push for gold. That's only what matters.

# HAMMER THE HARMATAN

I had a chat with a senior citizen on issues of climate change and the effect of human actions on our environment. While I listened to him, he reminded me of the same words I have been hearing since the first week of this year passed without the rains. He said, its being quite very long since I had seen a year starting without rains. I personally remembered too that we had continually gotten accustomed to New Year rains as evidence of a great year in the making. Now that the year had started without rain, I thought, could this mean the year won't be great?

Many who look out for omens from the weather as the prerogative for how the year will turn out may certainly find this writ uninteresting. However for those who don't, congrats, you can afford to battle the harmattan. Success isn't dependent on beliefs of how dry or wet the year begins. Anyone who wants to achieve anything must expect changing condition not necessarily because it affects his chance of succeeding but as part of the challenges he must face.

The harmattan season is often very dry, humid and cold. People struggle to get through with the weather; sometimes one could be lazy, weak and even sickly. There is a chance you may wake up from bed late and maybe have a head with your boss at work over being late. It's a divergence from the wet season that sees green vegetations blossom, calm air and a vibrant atmosphere. However the condition you may find yourself, it's the endpoint that really matters. That's where the focus is.

Life situations aren't always all the same every moment. Sometimes, it may be great like the period of blossoming rainy seasons when there is so much to eat, wear and celebrate or it may be the dry harmattan season when you scarcely can make ends meet. These periods certainly abound but what keeps one going is the big picture that we expect to reach whatever will happen.

The harsh reality of the harmattan hasn't stopped people going to work. People still have to wake up quite early and fend for themselves. Challenges in life must not stop you from marching on towards the desired picture. You have to be strong to challenge them.

The clothing during the harmattan is quite different from the normal dry weather. To avoid the cold, one has to put on heavy clothing. This is called adapting process. When there is a tough challenge, you have to adapt to suit the requirements of the

challenge. You have to equip yourself with the right knowledge in books, audios and audiovisuals so as to enable you position yourself stronger than the challenge.

Sometimes one needs to bathe warm water or get around fire to keep the body warm. During those harsh moments when you feel like giving up, you need some fire, some inspiration and motivation to steer you back to that position where you always feel comfortable at. This inspiration and motivation may come from a friend, or a writ like this one. Fire isn't always that friendly but at the right distance it works its magic. So too some challenging from friends or acquaintances may not seem nice to you at first but they do their work anyway that's why they are around you.

Each wave of dust during the harmattan is a constant reminder that life consists of those little seemingly unseen factors which influence how we get about running things. It may seem small and unseen at first but their destructive effects are seen after some time. The fact that this dust wave exist as hindrance to movement and driving hasn't stopped people from moving around. Cars still drive along our roads even in the thick fogs because they carry far penetrating lights which passes through the thick dust formations. You too have a light which you must allow shine through every dust fog in your life. Those little fogs

cannot hinder you from getting to your desired endpoint.  
However thick they become, you can get through them.

The harmattan soon will leave, and so will your challenges.  
Whatever it is you are going through, it has an endpoint. So  
when you feel dry and lost of ideas, you've got the right idea  
now. You can hammer that harmattan.

# STEPS TO BECOMING GREAT

You may be familiar with the beverage whose television advert carries the punch line “there is a drop of greatness in every man.” I was a teenager at the time when Guinness released the advert that carried this captivating message. It didn’t mean much to me then until during a Christian youth gathering I was opportune to be part. The teacher spoke about the possibilities invested in everyone, he talked about our television habits encouraging us to imbibe positive lessons from the things we watch making reference to the Guinness advert and its punch line. The teacher called at me and said “Eke, there is a drop of greatness in you.”

Over the years, I have been enthralled with the possibilities that just a drop of greatness can do that I have asked for a glass filled with greatness. I am very much grateful to that teacher for tagging me to this punch line that has help me to not just to see drops of greatness but also cups of greatness in every one I’ve come across.

My experience overtime has shown and very glaringly that quite a lot of people are unaware of the possibilities embedded in them. They are shallow-minded, down casted and lost away from the glorious opportunities that could have being theirs if they understood how much they are worth. Sincerely, I've heard people complain about their incapacity to attain the height they desire to attain. When they complain and sometimes to me, I wonder what it is they are complaining about when indeed I can see all pasted around them "Greatness".

I have discovered that once that initial drop of greatness is triggered in any person, they often come looking to discover the cup filled with greatness because they find themselves baffled by the uncommon possibilities that characterizes their new discovery. They come to a new light with an inspiration uncanny and deeply divine and they revel in the delight that it brings.

Are you in quay position at the moment and you seem lost of your true value and capacity perhaps because some person has ran you down? You can revel in the fact that I'm offering you now that so much assurance you need. There is a drop of greatness waiting to be triggered that has been left untouched because you never saw a need for it and even reassuring is the

cup of greatness that will come after you have exhausted the drop.

The question that may be throbbing your mind may be “how do I trigger this drop of greatness?” I once asked this question but to no one in particular but myself. I needed answers but I never got one until I got into the university and found out that if I was going to get through, something had to be incited. I did these things and have encouraged many to do same. The great thing is, it worked and its working.

- **I realized I needed a change.** Self-realization is the building block upon which you can lay your future attainment. Appreciate where you are but know that you cant afford to be here too long when there is greatness to pursue.
- **I sought help.** Appreciating your future endpoint is great but how to get there is the challenge. Google history’s greatest men on earth and the greatest men living, and get to know about them. I am certain you will find a story that sounds like your predicament. Read books, listen to great people speak. Meet counselors, people who have gone a step higher and listen to them put you through.
- **I sought for opportunity.** You may have capacity but it’s the people you have to impact that can measure the degree of your greatness. The truth is great people leave



for others. Seek for avenue to help others by seeking to develop that capacity embedded in you. The opportunities may not come at first in full glare but because you have sought help from all the sources and have learnt something that has triggered you, you will want to see how far your capacity can go. Believe me, when you do get the opportunity the first time, you will always want to do it and often more opportunities will come.

- **I've stayed humble.** What has killed many a great success story is pride. At the point they are about to tee, some persons think they've achieved it all. Their first time success gets into their head (the greatness drop) that they lose sight of the full cup that is attainable as they pursue their goal.
- **I've persevered.** You may come across people who at first time have this vague impression about you. Perhaps you may be looking tosh at present and they rubbish your capacity at first. It's happened to great people and its happened to me. The same people are often enthralled at your ability to mesmerize them once you get going. So if you hit that rock, bulldoze it.
- **Stay focused.** Keeping your eyes set at your great vision helps. The distractions that abound are excessively numerous. These distractions are like pitfalls and thorns

that hurt you or try to frustrate you. By being focus, you can and will always jump over them.

I've seen people who weren't the best in class but who have hit the greatness track and are increasing speed steadily. I know the possibilities that they now perform that once were impossibility. So if you are thinking you aren't there, I tell you bro and sis, there is a drop of greatness in everyman and that drop once triggered will lead you to the source for a cup, a bucket and perhaps a pool of greatness.

# HITMAN'S HIT LIST

We grew up in the early days of the television service when stations opened between 4pm and 12pm every weekday. Those years were not like now that we have variety to nourish our eyes. As kids, we were familiar with Robocop, commando, superman etc. For those of us who had the dignified video cassette player, which are now resting in peace, we were fortunate to watch action movies that starred acts such as James bond 007, Jet li, Adolf Schwatzneiger, and their likes. Thank goodness, advancement in technology and the DVD age have provided greater variety and a host of cinemas to go feed our eyes.

I do not watch movies often but I relish good movies when I see one especially those movies that involve a hit man having to challenge other challengers to a duel. As kids then, we would say “actor” and “boss” and giggle over one amusing action that caught our fancy. These days, I do not just watch movies for fun, I attempt to pick lessons from the movies and observe one form of technological advancement or the other that our brothers at the other corner of the world are succinctly displaying.

Most action movies have a hit man or hit men. These men often have difficult tasks to challenge. They find themselves in difficult predicaments with a responsibility to come around them. Often when I watch such movies, my mind rings back to the many times I have found myself in difficult terrains and had to swivel my way out. Like this hit men, we have periods of enormous challenges. Sometimes these challenges are self-imposed while at other times we inherit them. In any case, I observed the tenacity of purpose with which hit men carry out these responsibilities handed to them to tackle, and like them, we are all hit men having to come around our challenges.

Being a hit man is not an easy task, especially because they often have dreadful challenges to challenge. Sometimes the difficulty index of their task could keep you glued on the corner of your sit to your television as they churn out almost impossible stunts to get over their challenges. They make us feel like, no challenge is impossible. You often feel like “did you see that?” They make us believe that inside us is the capacity to defy our challenges as much as we dare.

Many times, hit men become fatalities of their challenges. The enemy sometimes inflicts them with so much pain that you wonder how possible it is for humans to bear such pain. They often develop a poise to survive and they do always survive even if it is with a stint of providence. We may call it “film

trick.” Sometimes, we may find ourselves victims of the situation we are trying to fight against and we ponder on how we are going to turn around this. Take inspiration from that movie. The hit man often manages to outsmart his enemies and you can get over that situation and will.

Hit men do have a “hit list.” They do not challenge or charge blindly. They have targets they must pull down before their mission is termed successful. You do have to have your eyes directed towards your target. Whatever you aim to achieve, you have to challenge with your eyes open. You are not aiming aimlessly else, you would end up roaming the streets lost. You have to drive towards achieving your goal and push hard against them. While you direct your energy towards achieving the big giant goal, you do have to achieve small goals in between to enable you reach the big goal.

Every target a hit man hits is for the general purpose of the achievement of the mission. Every target gunned down is one-step towards the completion of the mission. Hit men do not give up until they have brought down all the targets. You might have achieved little successes on the route to the achievement of your absolute mission, but the mission is not complete until you have achieved all the success you have to acquire. You have to strive to ensure no lapses exist in your pursuit towards success.

Before a hit man decides for a mission, he prepares himself with all the ammunitions he would need. As much as he grabs all he can gather, he understands that the direction of the battle may change where he would have to require new weapons or apply enemy weapons in his favour. You have to prepare your munitions. You will also have to be knowledgeable on the information that could help you to challenge your challenge and be open to changing circumstance with an ability to adapt. Serious challengers are ready whatever the situation and they open their minds to any hitches that may arise putting in place “plan b” options just in case “plan a” options fail.

While you relax with that movie, think about the characters and how they go about the plot, you will observe it is not just an entertaining story but also an enlightening one, opening your eyes to a new set of opportunities and understanding of life.

# HOW TO GET ON THE NEXT STAGE OF YOUR LIFE

You may remember sometime ago when you had a brawl with a relative, friend or acquaintance and you told him that you deserved more than what he was offering, that its only a matter of time before you get the right treatment you think you deserve. You assured him that you would be higher than his treatment. Everyone seems to have this experience

No one loves to remain stagnant. Our brains are wired with the mentality of change however high up there we seem to have arrived. We think and assume there is a natural higher point that has to be reached from where we currently are. If you think this way, you certainly are amongst the many who know what they want.

While most persons think they should be somewhere higher, a large percentage, about 99% are fraught with the challenge of

how to get to that next position or stage of their lives that they soon give up trying at all to get there. Yes they know there is a better stage they must climb to and they may even have had a glimpse of that stage they desire but they find the route to this next stage a difficult path to thread.

We are always struggling in that contest for the better next stage of our lives that we want. For most persons, we leave that next stage to hope. It's not that we shouldn't hope, but most persons "just hope" some better opportunity will arrive.

The defining act to climb to the next stage of our lives is to define what we think we want in that next stage. We have to paint a clear picture of how the better you will live. If you think, the next stage should include maybe a wife or husband, car, house, children, a higher academic degree, a better job, business, picture yourself having this things. When you know what you really want, it will help you take the major step towards that next stage.

That next step is "how." Here is where "how to" comes in. you begin to query your mind, read books, study videos and other materials on how to get the better that you want. Lots of persons have gone through the same route you desire to get through. They have had almost similar experiences that you will have to tackle and maybe they have developed a fast rule that will ensure you don't get by their mistakes. Their resources will



come handy. If you need a wife, ask yourself how do I get a wife? If it's a better job you need? Ask how and where the better job is. Whatever is in your next desirable stage, there is a "how to get it" attached to them.

When you are assured you know how, just act. If you think your next stage should include an academic degree for example and you have known how to get the admission, you will have to begin towards getting the admission by reading for the matriculation exams, picking the admission form and perhaps also saving some money for the fees. Why most persons fail to reach where they should be even after defining the picture and knowing how to get what they want is because they fail to act. They lack the fuel to act and therefore remain stagnant where they are.

Act in the direction of the stage. Think of a burgeoning musician who is watching his model on stage and hopes to one day be on that stage like his model. He will have to walk towards the stage by writing and producing songs that will also get attention like his model. When he gets the attention, he will be given opportunity to the stage. We are like musicians whose place is on the stage. If we don't produce a song, we can't get the opportunity to sing on the stage.

One factor that has stopped many from getting to the next stage of their lives is fear. We fear that our actions may not be

good enough. We think we aren't good enough to compete for the stage and we relax and accept where we are. Well, fear will always be there. If everyone accepted fear our world wouldn't be where it is. our world is getting better because people decided that they should go for more and better at a new stage of life. Just dare, everything will fall in place.

There is so much more out there for you to have only if you choose to quit your present stage on to the next stage of your life. Just climb.

# IGNORE YOUR IGNORANCE

As a student of life, I have come to full knowledge that it is absolutely impossible to know all that is to be known in life. I've seen that I keep knowing and there seems no limit to what I can know provided that I am ready to know. What this means is that there is some other person who manages to always know more than I know ad-infinity. I therefore will be forever ignorant no matter how much I know.

The more we know, the more ignorant we become. Knowledge exposes us to too many questions unanswered and one answered question isn't really answered but leaves trails of questions behind for a new chain of answers finding task. Think about those learned professors who have being professed as authorities in their field. They absorb themselves in much study that leaves them even more confused than they originally were and they continue to search for knowledge.

The men who created the airplane, the Wright brothers did so much groundbreaking research to produce their wonderful

piece of human marvel. They had knowledge and so much of it to have being able to build the first plane. What they lacked was the extras that arrived since their creation which subsequent designers and builder have tried to unravel and will continue to unravel without any end at sight. The innovation of subsequent engineers haven't taken the shine off the great work of the Wright brothers however ignorant they might have being about the new innovations that have made flying more comfortable and easier

Sometimes, we find ourselves around persons who know. These persons may make us feel small that we haven't had as much knowledge as they do. Well, the insinuation is often untrue. Everyone is a professor. The title professor isn't left to the men and women of the academia alone. It is incredibly baffling and if you do a research, you'd observe this truth that everyone in some way is a genius and each knows so much even if the much doesn't mean knowing the same set of knowledge.

I've happened to stay in urban areas where education is given priority and in rural areas where it is no focus. The men in the towns and cities know so much about what they have to know to exist in their niche while those in the rural villages have mastered the art of living in their environment. Both groups of persons will certainly find it difficult to live in a different

environment from what they have being used to because they are ignorant of what it takes to absorb themselves in a different environment from what they have been used to.

When someone tells you, you are not knowledgeable enough, you can ignore it. You don't need what you don't know to exist. This does not mean, you can't afford to seize learning opportunities if they arrive. However if they don't, you can get ahead with what you know already.

Many persons conclude that it is because they haven't gone to school or had a training that is why they are still struggling. While having education is great, not having it is an ignorance you need to ignore. Not everyone was meant to find their way through formal education. Some who even had the opportunity somewhere along the line discovered it wasn't even necessary so they had to do away with it. They accepted they needed the education ignorance to become knowledgeable in some other subject matter. If you don't have it, ignore it and get ahead with achieving great things. What you don't have is what makes the success story interesting.

Our ignorance just as opportunities stems from two factors, time and chance. The man who knows is blessed by virtue of the time and chance that has arrived for him. That doesn't make him in anyway better or capable of leading a better life than you can. You are ignorant of a thing perhaps because the

time and chance to learn it hasn't arrived. You can't however stop at where you are till you become informed. You have to set sail. Opportunity to get informed will arrive along the way if indeed you truly need it.

We find ourselves in a world where ignorance is painted as so bad a virtue. Well, if there is no ignorance, there will be no learning. If you are ignorant, it's really nothing to worry about. Just ignore it.

# LIFE: ALL ABOUT FOOD AND RAIMENT

In my early teens, my father often disciplined me especially when I broke a law at home, or school or came back home with a bad school result sheet. I had thought my dad was the only father who acted that way but I observed that all the dads of the boys around my age that time acted same. One statement never left their lips: look boy, I am doing this so that you can have food on your table tomorrow. They looked stern while they made this statement.

I have taken my time to observe too that it seems our dads were right. All our trouble in life seems to end in our stomachs. Food and clothing seems to be the focal point of every one's struggle. I had wondered why Jesus had spoken vehemently about not worrying about what to eat and wear when one could as well have worried about owning a horse or living in a house. Even Paul asked that Christians should be content having food and raiment. It seems they knew very well what others never knew that all the struggles in life are because we must meet these insatiable needs "food and clothing".

I took time out to tinker and I observed too that though we may grasp all the benefits of life, one could never do without this two. One may not have a house or car and may not need them but he can never do without food and raiment. All the big industries, shopping malls, business premises, banks etc are all secondary tools to feed these two insatiable needs.

The reason we buy cars is just to ease our movements towards getting to the place where we could get money to buy food and cloth. We buy or build a house because we desire a conducive place to rest, keep our clothes, and have our meals prepared. Hospitals are built so that when you are ill and you find food appalling, you can run in and have your health checked so as to enable you return to your eating capabilities. Banks exist only as a store for the money you will use in the future to feed yourself.

The quality of food a person eats, and the cloth he wears speaks volume of the status of a person. You look healthy and good looking because you eat right and dress to suit. One may not live in a big house or drive in a sport utility vehicle but he could still look larger than his means.

Our greatest fear isn't having shelter on our heads or having a posh car to drive in. One may have and lose these things but the deepest fear is having to go broke over what to eat and wear. One is not considered poor if he doesn't own a car or a house.



Poverty status is measured based on how one meets his daily need of eating and wearing clothes. That's why when you google poverty, what you see are pictures of almost naked people, thin with pot bellies and sunken eyes.

I would be mesmerized to see a wealthy man who claims to have all the wealth and doesn't eat and wear good clothes. Not being able to eat could be a huge problem and could tell signs of an end for such a man. The fact about not having food to eat is that your clothes also will look unfit and you look worn in them.

No matter how rich and wealthy a man may seem, his only gain of all his wealth is what he eats and wears. The respect he gets is all vanity and he could choose not to have them but if he fails to pleasure himself in tasty meals, he would be doing himself great harm.

Whatever way one chooses to hustle, whether by hard work or soft work, the goal is to put meals on the table. All the shouting of "be the best" by parents to their wards, the "boss hunting your head" phenomenon at the work place, the bowing of head to superiors even when they are younger, the "be punctual always, be diligent and do not procrastinate" talks all falls to one act, to place meals on the table and dress to look nice.

You can take time out to do an analysis too. I am certain that you will observe this same truth that reckons with Wiseman Solomon's words "life is vanity".

# IS THERE SPACE AT THE TOP?

I was woken quiet early one morning by the sound of a voice on a megaphone. The speaker, a preacher, was publicizing his special program tagged “**space at the top.**” While I disliked the disturbance of my sleep that came through the megaphone, the program’s tag got me thinking. **Space at the top? How about that?** The preacher assured that the top was for everyone and he was going to put his congregation through making a place for themselves at the top.

As a tinker, I have attended a good number of success seminars, read a couple of books and browsed the internet in pursuit of being at the top at what I do with the impression that there is always space at the top for me. But my experience on my way up has proven otherwise that there is actually no natural space up there for my ordinary ability however good it is. Those who have gone before me are up there and have taken all the spaces, so I’d have to displace them if I’m ever going to get to the top.

Seriously, we need an evolution of our mind from thinking the normal everyday way, to thinking off the norm. One certain knowledge we must carry with us is the fact that the top wasn't made for everyone. The ground is. How high we go is a measure of how our capacity carries us and perhaps fate too. Our ability to leave the ground and be lifted into another level of life is determined by our creative capacity at creating an original path which no one has ventured into or doing what some person who has gotten acclaim has done in a more spectacular way.

The belief that the top is empty is out of place. There can't be a crowd at the top however good the competition is. Only one person leads. As long as the persons under him don't pose a good challenge as to dislodge him, he remains there. There is nothing as one of the best, you are either best or next and down the pecking.

As much as those who are at the lower cadre strive to get up the pecking order, those perceived to be high up the cadre strive to beat each other to the topmost position. The topmost person gets all the awards however well the next performs.

Is there space for you at the top? Maybe, and maybe not. Maybe, and that's if you are already at the top. Off course, once you are up at the top, all you get is empty space for you to strive to cover. Maybe not, and that's if someone has to move

to have you move up. At this point, you will have to ensure the man up above you either moves up, you dislodge him or overtake him.

If everyone strives for the top and seek to get to the top equally, then everybody will remain at ground level. Life has a way of pushing some up and getting some down so that its cycle continues. There will be no cycle if we all get to the top equally. As much as everyone desires the top, life's circumstance grants unequal opportunities such that we do not all get the same opportunity at the time we all want that opportunity.

Your desire to get higher is a good quality, but think of the many in your shoes who also want to reach the same height you are striving to attain. They all get high grades at school and better education, but this does not necessarily mean they'd get to the top immediately however hard they try. Opportunity to get up sometimes comes many years after one has qualified for it against immediate expectation.

The road to the top requires sacrifice and most often, financial sacrifice. One has to buy education, skill and develop talent. Often though, as much as everyone may desire this top, they get encumbered by the cost of development they would have to undergo to be fit for the higher top position. So there again, money becomes another obstacle for the man that desires the

top. The “top” eludes a large chunk of persons who do not meet with fate or have money to fund their top desire.

But does the top really elude us? No. the top is relative. Everyone is at some point in their lives at the top. It is the heightened place where we consider ourselves to be and where we can make others see us as being. Your top changes with the environment or the kind of persons you interact with.

Don't feel depressed you aren't the best or at the top. You are there already.

# IT IS OUR TURN TO DRINK

I will hark back to several years ago when pipe born water was a novelty. For us who grew up in the countryside, we had to make do with the flowing streams about two kilometers away from our homes. For the luckier city chaps like me, getting water was a game. We had to search the neighborhood for a lucky host, the only person who had a Well. This was often distance away but we managed to make it fun walking as a crowd with all the children and our pet dogs. We considered the owner of the well a god and we had to beg sometimes to have this benefit offered us. The community gathered at the Well once it was open for use and as it only had one “fetching bucket,” we had to wait for turn to use it.

While this present dispensation has provided us much comfort, with water now flowing in the comfort of our homes, I vividly remember the many times we had to get through tussles. Fist flying was common, and women, for they were the bulk of matured fetchers, would raise hands against themselves for whose turn it was to fetch from the Well. My friends and I

loved those scenes as we would chuckle over to a distance from them and mock at how easy one person was being licked. These days, such fights are considered crude in a world where tussles are no longer characterized by strength but by wits.

Like the well in our community, we have open opportunities where everyone has equal chance to tap. The challenge has been that some persons make claims to what should be everyone's. They seize the resources for themselves

In the well of life are unending opportunities enough for everyone to draw from. These opportunities are like reservoirs where you can remove from without it ever finishing. When you have had enough from the well, allow some other person chance to it too. Live and let live. Do not be a barrier to some other person's joy when you have had more than your normal share.

It is not unheard of, stories of persons who have sabotaged resources meant for the overall good of citizens of a community, state, or country. These persons make profit of what should be general use by virtue of their position. They claim right to the Well and refuse to obey set down orders and rules guiding its use, breaking the process they should be part. They raise their shoulders in pride not knowing that close by, trouble lurks.



The many revolutions the world over were movements caused by the abuse of opportunity. I reckon with Abraham Lincoln in his sober letters to his son's teacher that "bullies are easiest to lick." Some persons at the Well saw it as their birthright often breaking line protocols and seizing the "fetching bucket" from its present user for their own use. Some persons became tired of seeing such and decided they would stamp their feet and stop it. It was often a bullfight that ended in favor of the down trodden.

Recent acts across the middle east and now finding its way into eastern Europe are testaments to the fact that if one chooses to drink from the well meant for everyone all alone, it is only a matter of time before he loses chance to drink from the well altogether. If you have the chance to see Mummuar Gadhafi and Saddam Hussein in hell, you can ask them.

All over the nation, youths are craving for some change. They are gradually losing hope of getting an opportunity to visit the Well less having to drink from it. While our "ogas at the top" are posing over the Well meant for everyone including themselves, they should remember that hearts are breaking. Soon, hearts will choose not to break, they will join ranks and be the propellants for the change that we so much need. They would say, it is our turn to drink.

# TAKE A BREAK

There's this attribute I noticed amongst my students as a teacher in a secondary school some years back. I remember also having this attribute as a student. The students often anticipated break time. If I dared stole into the break time, my students would scream and move for an adjournment of the class. They valued break time as it allowed them time away from serious work to relax, refresh, and have fun with their friends. For the more serious ones, it was time to find solace in the library or challenge other gifted talented friends to academic duels. The beauty of the break time was that the students solely managed it.

We can't continue hour-in hour-out without taking time to relax our minds over the task that we are handling. One may consider himself superman, but even superman often found time to rest. The value of rest cannot be overemphasized. Our body needs enough rest to make us stronger and healthier.

Like our local adage that says, "body no be firewood", our body isn't firewood. Firewood can burn off and be useless afterwards but our bodies do not deserve such treatment. The prevailing tendency in us is to stay alive and afloat.

Companies value the welfare of their workers. People managers understand that if they want to keep workers working for longer years, they have to manage the time of work and allow for short breaks at intervals. These companies provide leave periods in which their staff do not work yet are paid full wages and special allowances. They believe that their workers deserve this break times to enable them regain strength, build on their incompetence, and come back stronger. No company would want to lose her best staffs.

The love of money is one lure whose effect could be evasive. I once found myself in a situation. I wanted money really much and I had the opportunity from the home lessons I organized. I was being paid my allowance from my school and made extra lucre from the lessons. It happened that I had many home students and taught from house to house often returning home by 9pm having left before 7am every workday. My weekends were clogged with lessons and on Sundays, I had to be in church. At the start, I enjoyed the home classes and the money that came through them but as they increased taking more of my time, the joy travelled and I increasingly became prone to headaches, fever, and other stress related illnesses. I grew thinner and looked pale that finally I decided to quit them, and soon I regained myself.

I've learnt over time the value of having breaks in between work. Now I do ensure that as much as possible I make my work in a more relaxed environment creating a good ratio between work and rest. I've learnt that money doesn't come because one works hard; rather, it comes to those that work smart. I've developed a working habit with rest always behind it acknowledging that the essence of my work is to give me a good rest.

Some persons think the title "workaholic" is some great title. While people may hail what you may consider as good work ethics, the same people know that someday you'd break down at the pace you are going. Check the manuals of vehicle engines or generators; you'd observe that there is certain time frame or distance covered that the engine must be rested. It's not that the engine cannot work beyond that frame. It's that the engine has a greater chance of breaking down when it works without resting.

Man produces his machineries with rest time for them in mind. If he does this to his creations, he too must recognize himself is a creation of God that deserves rest. Many souls are not dying because they lack money or food. They are dying because they don't rest. They thus become easy prey to ailments such as high blood pressure, heart attack etc.

Our body has a mechanism that helps check us though, if we over run. That's often when we get down ill. We get ill because our body needs to regain itself. You feel the pains of the recovery process because you have hurt the body through your troubling its capacity to work.

The body does not deserve all that troubling. Let it work to its capacity and refresh it often with good food and a beautiful environment.

Keep your body, give it some break.

# IT'S TIME TO CELEBRATE

I stopped over to have a chat with an acquaintance on Christmas day. He sat on a ramshackle seat in a thatched drinking hut, having a sip off his alcohol bottle with a cigarette on his hands. He spoke with the characteristic demeanor of drunks however he had some good words to say. I am very happy to see the end of another year. I may not have all I have wanted to have with all the disappointments of the past few months, however I am alive and that's important. It calls for celebration, he concluded. I personally felt moody over events in my life in the last few months but the words of this young man quickened me. There is indeed a reason to celebrate.

As the year finally reaches a head, rice, oil, chicken, turkey etc. is changing hands. The joy of seeing another year get by erupts from within us. For some, it might have been a challenging year, for others maybe uhuru. In spite of whatever has happened, celebration rents the air everywhere, pictures being taken at random and a blissful smile characterizing the faces of all the celebrants.

It's time to celebrate and there is every reason to. We had begun a chapter in January with all the anticipations of great outcomes. It might have been the anticipation of a great job, a wife, a child, an opportunity to travel abroad or whatsoever. You might have written down your goals you anticipated you would achieve and you just did not hit the target. Well just check again.

If you have that goal list in a corner of your room, you can go look at it again. If you don't, you may still take your mind back through the last year. Often, we may think we haven't achieved a lot or anything as yet when indeed beyond our expectation, so much has been achieved. So lot might have gone through water but quite a lot too has gone over it.

Personally, I did my accounting too as I reviewed the year that has just gone by. I had mighty aspirations that I wanted to see happen this year. Sure, I began work with all the tenacity I could garner. I had some high moments as well as low moments but I observed personally that though I did not achieve all the big dreams I wanted, I got through some big dreams I never thought I would achieve, a real cause to celebrate. I have decided to shove off my mood and smile away on the great benefits I have enjoyed.

We cannot afford to look away from the benefits that have come through to us in the last one year. It's something worth

being happy about. As much as we can, and as much as we can afford, we can throw some little party with some friends and bask in the euphoria of the moment. This end of the year will not be better without that full smile of yours giggling all the way. It's time to put on your dancing shoes and get dancing.

The energy that characterizes the celebration mood especially at this time is often furious. It calls for caution. We must realize that while we celebrate, and for whatsoever reason we celebrate, there will still be more to celebrate. There will still be future drinks, chicken and goats that have to be drunk and eaten. We can't afford to lose tomorrow on the platter of today's little celebrations. Our watch word must be eat and drink and let others have theirs too.

The list of dying people as a result of celebrations this season is infinitesimally endless. Many are getting drunk and rushing drunk to eternity. You can't afford to be another statistic; we can't afford to lose you or some other person to a carelessness that is a result of trying to celebrate the year ending. Yes, you have to celebrate and yes, you have to celebrate right.

By now, you should be having the goals for 2015 set. You don't have to get into 2015 before you begin to set the goals. Look back at the things you wanted to get in 2014 that you haven't had yet. Place them on priority top this time and add more that you think should be part of the year. While you celebrate, think



about what it is to be achieved. This will help you develop a degree of self control.

2014 is gone and it's gone forever. Look forward, upward and onward. Forget about the mistakes and inconsistencies of the past and forge ahead because in 2015 you will live in a world of uncommon possibilities.

# JUST A SECOND; THAT'S ALL YOU NEED

Life's dark phases sometimes appear so long, that it seems an impossibility that great times will arrive. The anticipation that characterizes the waiting period may be huge but this often fails to guarantee the kind of life that the common hustling man on the street wants to have. The assurance of a better future for some is only generations away that the picture they very much desire to live in is a far cry from reality. In the face of this myopic viewed belief is one truth; that it only takes a second for change to happen.

A graduate friend from one of the universities had this experience to share. He had managed to make his way through school with the belief that once he got off school, it was only a matter of days before he picked up an appointment with one of the blue chip companies in town. It happened that he was seeing from the perfect situation if all was well. However, the ideal situation doesn't happen always. He was ill prepared for what would hit him. It turned out that his desire was only a dream that he had to strive for.

Months passed and it became years and there seemed no certainty that a door would be opening anytime soon. His situation had moved from bad to worse that he finally concluded himself unfit to continue with life. In the face of his uncertainty, fate had something more. God was certainly around watching. It happened that on one faithful day while he pondered on his predicament and how he was going to make through another day, he heard a knock on the door. A letter had just arrived in the hands of the postman. Unsure what the letter contained, he opened it and inside it was his appointment letter for immediate appointment with benefits of a car, a well furnished apartment and a salary in millions. It seemed like a dream, but it was reality.

The experience above is only one of many stories of change. Your case may not be job but it may be your quest to climb up your job ladder, a deadening sickness, a quest for admission into a tertiary institution, a wayward child, a difficult parent, a quest to survive, a challenging relative, a physical challenge, a desire to pass an examination, an unpleasing spouse etc. just a second is all you need to overcome them.

That “second” moment is always around the corner waiting for the right time. But the time often seems like forever because sometimes we are too impatient to wait and too patient to act. Our impatience at waiting to have that moment arrive is

because we expect the ideal which naturally is “now”. We fail to acknowledge too that “now” is relative and it shifts as time flies. We seem very patient at not taking action leaving ourselves to fate and then hate the fact that fate isn’t getting us what we want at our perceived ideal time.

No matter how difficult one’s present predicament is, that special second of change is always around the corner. That second only eludes us at each time of trying because either it isn’t the right time for it to reveal itself or we haven’t done enough to merit that change time.

While we wait for that brief future second, the route to that time begins from each now second. Each second of change counts, when we act as to expect our change at each second. This expectation is an actionable one.

Are you afraid you will be overwhelmed by your current fears about that seemingly impossible task? You might have given your best shot and what you get in return is a chain of losses. Maybe you just have to take one more second of failing to hit the right time for the overturn of your fate. Don’t give up.

Whatever it is that troubles you, through your spines down to your marrow, that has failed to give you rest, you may just be that one second away from a new story. Is it sickness? Just one second to your healing. Is it poverty? Just one second to

wealth. Is it a crumbling marriage? Just one second to peace. Is it a strained friendship? Just one second to a reunion.

Don't give up at pursuing the kind of possibility you want to see however bad present moment may be, because you never will tell when that second of change will arrive. Just wait, it's coming.

# JUST LET GO!

Listening to the lyrics that comes through the speakers of my hi-fi system could be tough especially with the kind of songs that pour from them. In spite of this, I listened to one brother who managed to help me with some message, “just let go.”

Over the few years I have lived on earth, my human nature has been at loggerheads with the materialistic desires that characterizes earth. The desire to have and hold on to everything the world offers has been so strong that I had struggled to let go some things sometimes. In the face of this challenges though, I have managed to soar over some.

Letting go could be really challenging especially if the things you want to let go is pricey and had taken some good sacrifice to have. You often hear some persons say “I cannot afford to lose this oh, whatever it will take, I must hold on to this.”

Some persons may be of the opinion that it is cowardice having to give up some things in the face of some challenge. We want to hold on to that land, asset, building, money, fiancé, friend even in the face of negative turbulent events. We want to fight until the last and payback coin for coin any bad effect meted on

us. Our ego and pride is built up that we cannot even think of being losers.

While its great character being able to fight and defend ourselves against cheats or traitors, we don't have to fight every time. Sometime, we will have to learn to let go.

Do you remember sometime you had a quarrel with a friend who had hurt you and another friend had to pat your back and say, forget it? You remember how furious you were but you managed to calm your nerves. You said, look I am letting go these because of this person, if not I would have showed you who I really am. Don't laugh at these, you did. You remember how tough it was right?

It could be difficult letting go any hurt done you. However, it would be manly doing it. A popular cliché reads “forgive and forget”, but for some disgruntled folks, this is an impossibility. Forgiveness is not part of their dictionary and even if they forgive, forgetting could be some great trouble.

Real men often announce their entrance by their ability to let go. They show off their material capabilities by letting go debts owed them and spending in a manner that shows off their material wealth. Our wealth is often measured in the amount we are capable of letting go when the need arises. This is why the richest men show their ability to let go their wealth by the

use of their charity organizations and the support of projects aimed towards the development of humanity.

The quality we are able to let go is the quality we will always receive. It's a principle that has always worked. If you do want to be bigger than your peers, who have hurt you, you have to forgive them. if you want large sum of money, give out.

Letting go is a godlike attribute. You earn godlike status especially when you let go something very pricely to you as well as to the person you are giving to. Its sacrifice.

Why choose to live under the burden of some misdeed perpetrated by some person when you can free your mind, let go and live your life. One fact is, when you are encumbered by the thoughts of some ill done to you, you dwell under the persons shadow, and instigate hatred. This hatred could further grow to giant proportions causing ill health to the bearer and maybe death.

How much can you let go? Can you let go at all? It could be difficult. That's where the difference maker comes in. God makes the difference. You have to pull him towards your side and ask Him for guide.

Who is that person you know you have to forgive but you can't just imagine forgiving. You let go and give up any strong line that had demarcated you both. You can do it.



You may be holding on to something that is valuable to some other person but less valuable to you. Just let it go.

No price is too huge to pay when the relationship between you and some other person is at stake. Just let go

# LAUGHTER, LIFE'S MEDICINE

The average everyday life is characterized by its series of troubles. Life is absolutely complicated and one may not comprehend the reasons why such complications occur. This complication leaves us in sadness querying why unpremeditated actions should take place in the face of harrowing life experiences.

We want to laugh so long through life even in the face of its challenges. It seems a big huddle though because of the seemingly uphill difference that characterizes the challenging life and a laughing smiling life. There always seems that reason we give for not allowing that big smile relieve us of our burdens.

Truth is, laughter feeds the soul. A laughing mind transcends beyond every upheaval it faces. It builds around the mind a seeming confidence of a better future even when the present seems herculean. The ruptures of laughter permeate as many

minds as it comes across causing those minds to be triggered into a laughing life too.

The beauty of a laughing life is the positive health effects that it projects. Laughter helps build a healthy lifestyle providing solutions to daring illnesses such as high blood pressure, stress etc, helping to free the body from all the clogs that hold man down.

We can't afford to lose another man to high blood pressure or other heart related illnesses when they can easily ease themselves with just an hour of laughter every day. Doctors have proven that one hour of laughter everyday keeps the body healthier and bouncing than any other known drug.

The effect of a despairing life is the hopelessness that it propels. Laughter in the order hand projects hope, faith and confidence. It portrays our happy state and reveals an inner strength only projected by our capacity to overlook our burdens and see way past our present predicaments.

The best and cheapest lifestyle you can afford to have is one filled with laughter. It doesn't cost much and it isn't complicated. It's an easy life that lightens and even enlivens you beyond what you could ever imagine. It doesn't cost a dime. It just requires your own decision or choice to stay happy.

Your choice is your choice and no one else's. That face is banking on you and no one else to revel in the joyful moments that life presents. It is dependent on you to create for yourself those happy, joyful, laughing moments in spite of what life offers. Your choice means, it all depends on you. Only you can feed yourself with all the happiness that you deserve.

So here, you are reading this and wondering can I really have a fulfilled happy life. Sure you can produce that life. You can laugh all the way through the upheavals that characterize life. You can get through all that difficult moments and still keep that cheerful look. It all depends on you, your decision to instigate that life and find some good reason to always laugh however challenging life becomes.

What's that problem that has kept your face stone caged? C'mon, you've found the right antidote. Just laugh. It's possible now and possible for the rest of your living days on earth. You will feel relieved from all the burdens and hopelessness into a new life transcending beyond all the worries into a new height of uncommon possibilities

You may ask what you have to do to instigate yourself into laughing. Well, begin by searching right inside you. There are many events in your life which when you do look back, you think of how funny you might have acted or some other person had acted. It often calls for laughter when you reminisce the

past and discover that sometimes you might have acted in some awkward manner or you had perhaps being too overzealous.

You can as well find delight in comedy shows around your vicinity at least once a week or as often as you can afford. There are videos and even comedy books with lots of awesome stories to keep you giggling. You can even listen to radio shows or watch on the television. Comedy and jokes are very much becoming a huge part of our society.

There are also people who you find delight in because of their ability to make you happy anytime you are around them. You can always strive to be around such persons as much as you can. They could be family or friends or even acquaintances.

Laughter sparks a magnificent sense of brilliance once you can instigate it rightly. Always find that good reason to laugh; it's always there around you.

# LET'S HIT THE AIRWAVES

Thank God for technological advancement. If you are born in this age, understanding the difference between then (the days of our ancestors) and now could be so great a challenge. That time, you had no right to your own entertainment except you were king and news was carried by one ragged man who was second to the king only in attracting attention. If you missed the news, you either had to go ask your neighbor or wait for the gossips that followed the news. You dare not miss festivals, else you missed a chance too few to listen to good music and be entertained.

Times have changed. Our dispensation has seen unparalleled development with music now hitting us feverishly. We get the news at our fingertips, entertain ourselves from the comfort of our living room with super high definition screens and these days we can get to watch in three dimension and we are not stopping there.

The rave for space in the airwaves is going gaga especially with the seemingly high profitability of the venture. Who wouldn't be glad having that great voice on radio, or being the cynosure of all eyes on TV? Everyone does have this desire but not everyone get the chance at it. A good reason is the quantum training that is required before one is considered fit for the job.

In the airwaves of life, only a few voices get to be heard, a handful faces get to be seen, and why not yours? Why celebrate others when you can be that voice and that face we should be listening to, watching on TV, viewing on the internet, and reading onnewsprints. Haven't you thought of these?

As much as many persons desire to hit the airwaves, just handfuls do. Often, talent and inherent ability are the prerequisite for selection in an audition. Crowds gather at an audition but the selectors look out for the difference makers; those whose talent stand them out. What's your inherent talent? Have you discovered that great thing you are good at. If you have, that's great, but if you've not, then your work begins now. There is that specialty of yours that stands you out ahead of others even when you are not putting in all you can. That's your selling point; develop it.

Some persons may not have the knack, but determination to succeed drives them. They see what they want and though they might lack ability, they do not lack the ferocity to act. They

develop themselves towards an opportunity at the airwaves. It's not often easy for them but they often beat the hurdles and manage to stand up head high. What you lack in skill, replace with rugged determination, and your determination will develop the skills.

While talent and skill may be great, you still have to get some training from masters who have had their turn at the airwaves of life. Though inside you lies all the talent, it has to be developed for effectiveness. You are aware that diamond will still be diamond without the cutting but it's never going to shine without cutting. Those who are very much familiar with shining sparkling diamond (a majority of humans) would find it difficult recognizing an uncut diamond. You may have skill and talent but you need the help of renowned trainers to help mold you into what your talent has fashioned for you. That's why you have all the art, music, and TV schools.

With each passing day, your skill improves and you step into the wider view of the world with a bang. You become the gist of the town. While you have reached that status of acclaim, the major challenge often, which is the fallout of many greats is the ability to stay up there and push. It's not so easy. You have to be creative with new ideas knowing that behind you is a crowd who are striving to outdo you. To stay ahead you have to create the head.



Being an heralded voice or face attracts its downside too. All the paparazzi and “your life now a mirror phenomenon” hit you. Some persons quiver at these, the reason why superstars are the victims of suicides. Understand that with a higher life comes a higher expectation from you. Everyone is peeking at you, the one they’ve come to consider as model. You sure need to model your life in the right light as an example.

Now it’s time you hit the airwaves. I hope you have had your script rehearsed. Complacency could be very disastrous so be prepared.

You can have the air.

# BUILD YOUR BUILDING

When I was little, I had often marveled at the high risings that dotted my city's landscape. I was opportune to climb to the top of a fifteen storey building once along with my schoolmates. It was tiring since we made use of the stairs. That time, we wondered at how those high rise buildings were built and day dreamed of someday owning such buildings. As I grew and got involved with developing buildings, I understood the many intricacies that characterized getting a building of any nature on the ground. Looking through life as a grown man, I've observe that each person is a building of some sort, diverse and unique in some way.

The start of any building project requires that an architectural design is done. An architect is often asked to draw out the plan of the building while an engineer is asked to test the design for strength and ability to withstand the stress or strain that will characterize its use. Everyone that arrives into earth was designed prior to coming in and finished tested for adaptability and capacity to withstand the challenges of earth. You are where you are now because you could withstand the intricacies and challenges that erupted, is erupting and will erupt over the

period of your stay on earth. You were actually finished and tested before you were released to be built on this side of life.

Every building has a foundation, the foundation being characteristic of the type of building built on it. The foundation is structured with the capacity to bear the building load. A faulty, inappropriate foundation will mean the building failing or crumbling anytime soon. As human buildings, we each have foundations from which the quality of life we live today, i.e. the building, is structured from. This foundation is characterized by the training from our parents or community, education from our teachers at school, religious trainings from sects, as well as mentorship from mentors. The quality of the training, the foundation, often reveals itself in the results that come after, the success achieved.

You will observe that buildings defer in height based on the nature of the foundation. One will be expecting so much more than expected if he tries to build above the foundation and will be undermining capacity if he builds less than the foundation can carry. The height you can reach in life is equivalent to how much have being put into you during the nurturing or foundational years. The foundation may be solid but that is never enough to conclude the building as complete. Something has to be raised on the foundation. You may have a solid foundation but that is not enough to make you the success you

should grow into. You have to continuously work, putting daily inputs towards the actualization of the building.

A solid foundation without solid blocks, composites and irons to support the building may still mean the building is going to fail. You may have gotten the best start at life; you still need the best everyday inputs. You can't afford to get along with mediocrity in the light that you have a steady firm foundation; you would fail to hit the achievement target. With a firm solid foundation, you can build quality structures that will rise through the skies.

A building is not just the foundation and walls, it requires a roof and finishing. A building does not become complete until a roof is placed over it. The roof is the topmost covering of a building. If you don't reach the top, you haven't finished yet. You have to get to the pinnacle where your success is considered complete. The type of finishing given to a house describes the kind of attention that house gets. Finishing is what adds value to a building. You will certainly need to court attention and quality attention by surrounding yourself with quality people and ideas when you get to the top. The top is not for mediocres, it is for those who know value and are ready to get value. Because everyone aims at the top, only keeping yourself valuable by increasing knowledge even at the top will keep you at the top

for so long. We never stop learning even when we have attained the highest height there is to be attained.

You are a building, only that the quality of that building will depend on you greatly. Don't stop till you finish your building. Keep building.

# LET'S SWEEP OUR WORLD OF CHALLENGES

In sub-Saharan African where brooms are still part of everyday life, it is common place to find brooms being used as cleaning facilities. It's such a common tool that one would hardly find its absence in an African home. The broom though is more than a cleaning facility, it is a life teacher.

Life is filled with challenges which come voluntarily or involuntarily into a person's life. The greatest joy any man would like to have is to live a life free from challenges. Consider these challenges as dirt. Dirt finds itself into an area unconsciously or consciously. It results from dust that settles in an environment, compartment or room. No one loves to live in a dirty house, so too no one likes the challenges of life. That's why the broom comes handy as a guide to sweeping these challenges away.

A broom consist of individual broomsticks combined together to create a bunch. Every broom stick is important but each broomstick cannot sweep independently. Each requires another stick and a host of other sticks to be able to sweep off dirt. We need the help of others as much as we have capacity within ourselves. We can pull down big challenging situations when we work together as a team. The capacity of a collective whole can do much more than one man will do.

Take a look at the broom. Each consisting broomstick has deferring characteristics. Some are strong, feeble, short and others long. The broom will however only be a broom when these all combine. Each person has independent attributes with differing roles to play in helping you get over challenges. You can't afford to overlook any person around you. They each have a role that some other person will not be able to play however well they try.

The broom is a symbol of unity. One cannot break a bundle of broom however hard he tries, however when each is separated into single broomsticks, there is enormous breaking ease. Our collective effort at facing our challenges is a great attribute. We tend to do more as a collective united whole. The moment that unity of purpose is removed and each strives independently, each can only do as much as his individual capacity can carry.

Truth is, two people can do more within a short time than what each independent persons will do when added together.

Each broom stick is combined together into a bunch with the help of a binding rope. It is this rope that keeps the broomsticks together. This rope is unity. Without unity, we cannot work together. We need to be united in the fuel of love and passion towards the achievement of our set goal and objectives and then this will help us overcome any challenge that stands our way.

The cost of a broom is negligible compared to how much dust it can sweep. Its importance and usefulness transcends its prices. It's one of the cheapest yet useful instruments. It does not cost much to be united towards a course. It just takes an agreement to work together. However its effect is in gargantuan dimensions bringing about uncommon achievements that could never have being possible.

All brooms do not all have equal sizes. The effectiveness of a broom is dependent on the size of the bunch, the strength of each broomstick and the nature of surface one intends to sweep. Not all surfaces apply the same type of broom.

Challenges are of types. Some will require the action of maybe just one or two persons while another may require a large group of persons. One must know the quality of human input



necessary to tackle a challenge in the shortest time or else risk spending so much money and much time

The common nature of the broom doesn't make it lose its worth. It does so much however invaluable it seems. No one person or group is common however common they may seem. Everyone has capacity and value they can place in that project to see it come through. The most worthless person isn't worthless at all. He just hasn't found his use. When his use arrives, his value will be released.

Whatever it is that is your challenge and that seems impossible, take the broom for inspiration. Learn the power of team work, find some other person with the same passion as you have and push to have that challenge overcome.

Remember, together everyone achieves more. Start sweeping now.

# LIFE IS ABOUT “A LOT”

You may be familiar with the phrase “I’ve been through a lot,” and perhaps you have used it one time or the other to define the challenge you had passed or are passing through. Whether one is having a great time or going through difficult times, there is still that lot that you are getting through or have gone through. It seems “a lot” never ends and there won’t be a better phrase to describe life’s challenges however good or bad.

One will have to go through a lot whether he is going up or down the social ladder. This lot may be the strive to remain among one’s high class peers, the challenge to remain at the higher strata of the class, the tussle to have even one meal a day, the struggle to meet up with the landlord’s demands, etc. the list goes on. Whether you are down or up, it’s quite a lot that has kept you there.

The question that may trouble a thinking mind is; if everyone goes through the same “a lot,” why are some people having better living standards and higher achievements than some others? The answer lies in the relativity of that lot. A lot is the input we are putting in to achieve a goal or the effect of life’s inconsistencies on us.

If we define a lot in respect of achieving a goal, it takes so much of perseverance and persistence to get at a goal and to remain there once you get there. We are not all born with silver spoons. Most persons will have to struggle from the ground level where they were born to through every strata of society to the top of life. These processes aren't achieved by sleeping, thinking or day dreaming. It takes pains brought about by hard work. It also takes a lot of time and energy. There may not be friends around and often friends won't hang when you are nowhere. You may be scorned and laughed at as being overly ambitious.

In spite of what challenges come, they stand against them and challenge till they move each step up. They go through a lot getting up and they will go through the lot remaining up because of the fear of the lot that characterizes the down life. It's a lot down but the lot is worth it when you up. Those who are down work harder doing a lot, while those who are up work less, doing a lot. Either way both sides do a lot.

If we define a lot as the inconsistencies of life, this refers to the situations that arrive after we have reached a peak position and we find ourselves going down however hard we try to fight against it. It's quite a lot going down from a peak. Think of a mountain you are trying to surmount. You will strive against opposing wind and height to get up, while coming down the

wind still remains your challenge as it makes you lose balance in forcing its strength at you and making you move in its direction. You may even slip down the mountain side and injure yourself once you lose balance. It's a lot going up the mountain and it's no easier coming down.

Life has "a lot" to offer the one who is desirous to get that lot. Think about all the good things of life that are available to us; the cars, houses, businesses, money, etc. that's a whole lot that is in the offering. If you have life in you, that's a whole lot of opportunities that's coming around. There are a lot of possibilities in life that presents themselves because we are in life. These possibilities enable us act in a way as to propel us towards getting the lot that abounds in life.

Our societies are built around the lots of life; there are a lot of laws, a lot of ideas, a lot of people, a lot of cars, a lot of houses, and a lot of many things we can think of. It seems inevitable that if there is no "a lot" we won't exist.

If you've being thinking a lot, its only because a lot is what you have to undergo in life and get back in return.

# LIFE'S LETHAL PENCILS

We have at one time as children grown up making use of pencils as our first writing tool. However, we discover later on that we could make more permanent prints with the pen or biro a few years into primary or elementary school. Overtime we tend to have given up the use of the pencil to only specific uses like for drawing whether it's in the arts, construction or engineering thus dignifying the pen or biro as a more important resource. These days of computer aided designs has not helped pencils fare better.

In spite of the downgrading use of pencils, it pokes its head towards human life to share salient points that can influence how we lead our lives.

Pencil marks are temporary and could easily be erased from the paper with an eraser signifying how transient our lives are. Humans live in life as marks that soon enough disappear once their time has evolved and the great master eraser has erased them off the paper called life. When the master decides it's time to have you cleaned off the surface of the earth, there is hardly anything one can do about it.

To make good use of a pencil, it has to be sharpened. A pencil is not valuable when it is blunt. It finds value under the cutting of the razor. The best in us that makes us valuable to the world around us only arrives after the painful and sometimes long period of life's cutting. We become valuable only after we have managed to come through this period stronger than before.

Every time a pencil is sharpened and used, it loses its long size to life. This is what we call diminishing effect. It happens that however way we see life, we don't get younger. We continually diminish till we get off life. We labour every day in life and the effect of our labour results in the effect we see around us. We either increase or decrease all towards the great diminishing that certainly happens.

Pencils can be broken and still find use as a writing tool however small it may become after the breaking. No circumstance in life should diminish our ability to affect life positively the best way that we can. Challenges may come to break us or move us and try to devalue our capacity. Just stay strong to what's in you already and keep affecting lives positively.

Look through the inside of a pencil, you will find that long and round piece of graphite. The pencil may seem like that round covering of wood however beyond the wood is the value, the piece that makes all the marks. There is something in you that

is beyond the shell of what people can see. You are not you because of your face or body structure. You are who you are because of the substance of your heart. If the outside isn't nice it's understood. All pencils don't look nice but they are still useful. Your worth is not in the casing.

Pencils could be thin or fat, big or small, wide or slim; however they find immense value in the hands of the user. You are a valuable tool in the hands of the master. However your size, it doesn't matter. God still finds you an immense tool to write with in this side of life and he is using you.

Some pencils make thick dark prints while some others make thin light prints. The thick prints don't easily get erased by eraser while the light ones disappear in one brush of the eraser. What kind of imprints are you making?

Your effects should live prints that will last through the throbbing of time's sands. We live life as pencils making marks everywhere around life. What matters is what marks we make and how long this marks will stay. Most persons hardly leave any marks because they fail to discover their writing capacity. They thus end up only as a story once told. Some others are busy making positive marks time will never forget. It's only a matter of choice.

Just remember, you are God's lethal writing weapon, only but a pencil in the hands of the creator.

# LIFE'S GOOD

Recently, I strolled into a hospital for a “faith at work” session. I had being in an hospital ward some time ago and it was not the best experience having a family in the ward. I had firsthand experience what life in a hospital bed really is.

As I moved from bed to bed during this session, I observed something. All the patients had a desire to hold on to life. On each bed, I found a Bible and even when the owners were incapable of reading them, they seem to find solace having the bible beside their pillows. The Bible for them was some spiritual succor they could hang on to in the face of their life threatening ailments.

No one wants to die. Everyone wants to hang on to life much longer. However bad the state of a person's life, he still thinks there is hope around that some more breathe in life can offer. The fear of death lies in the uncertainty that clouds our knowledge of what life after life on earth will look like.

I remember listening to the conversation between a woman and her daughter. This woman was advance in age and possibly reaching the close of life. She was not having the best life either



for a woman her age. While she discussed with her daughter, she had disclosed to her how she had managed to escape an accident. Her daughter laughed as she narrated the incident and asked whether she was no going to die. The woman rejected the question and informed her daughter that she was not going to die as life is too sweet.

While I listened to that woman's conversation with her daughter, I smiled. The woman shares the same attribute with a majority of earth's occupants. We will not die because life's good.

What characterizes the good life? It's thought provoking a question. Finding an answer to this question could be difficult because I have come to discover that it's only in death that everyone (rich and poor) agrees that life is good.

The poor think the wealthy class is living the good life and they strive to find their way to this class. The wealthy class feels they are living the good life and are very much comfortable. The consensus is that one has to be wealthy to have a good life. That's some bad conclusion that is dismissed on grounds of wrong premise.

When one finds himself in between the life here and that after, he dismisses any allusions he may have had about how life has treated him even if he was a miserly poor person. He learns to

find contentment and wishes just for one chance to prove he could be contented. To him, life's good once he is alive.

To define the good life could be some challenge especially because each person's experiences vary. However, the congruent definition of the good life is the God life.

God creates us each for purposeful living. The good life is achieved when we attain the state of purposefulness. This is a state when our minds come at peace with God and we reach contentment mountain even when we lack the basest of life's amenities.

What this means is that one could be poor yet live the good life and one may have the whole world and still live an unachieved life.

While wealth may provide us some convenience, it does not provide all. It may bring us physical satisfaction but we fall short of the inner peace in our heart that characterizes the good life.

When we have inner peace, our wealth becomes a plus, an extra. Our physical properties though may not count so much because our source of joy is not derived from them. Rather, we attain this joy from the flow of God's goodly inspiration.

Enjoying the good life has been debacle by man's desire to seek first the physical moth ridden treasures of our world and last, the super-rich Godly treasures thus losing our sense of

purposeful life. Thus at the hospital bed, man finally accepts that he had wrongly pursued the wrong treasures of this world and seeks to pursue God's treasures if the opportunity presents itself.

If you do want the good life and desire the opportunity to brag about how good life is, you can find that satisfaction in attaining the God life.

Let God be the inspiration of your life and accept his purpose fully. The next song you will be singing will be "Life's good."

# LOOK AROUND, LOOK WITHIN

While driving on the road of life, we often get to a crossroad. This happens to everyone. You are frustrated out of ideas and query the inadequacies of your capabilities. You might have painted the future picture you are driving at and you seem very certain to reach there at your current pace but alas, it just happens that you find yourself lost at the center of nowhere.

If you have felt this way, know you are never alone. Every person had to go through the same trying time as you. If they came through theirs, you can and will.

Imagine a child who has lost his way. He knows where he is heading to but he is unsure which road leads there. Sure, tears may drop from his eyes and he may fret or worry. That's what happens when we lose sight of where we intend to be. The great news is, you have a picture or a place you are desirous to reach. The bad news is, you are lost.

Here is some help. This is not a manual, but you can pick up the pieces of your lost life and find direction from it.

When you get to that crossroad and you are certainly unsure of the next route, look around.

Why look around? The reason is you are not the only person lost. Many persons have been in your shoe and have left wearing your shoe. You can learn from them. You will be seeing people returning from the same route that you are yearning to drive. Ask them how the journey has been. They probably have been at the same place you want to get to. Their experiences can be very useful in guiding you.

When you do look around, you will see all kinds of persons. Some are like you, lost and they do realize they are lost. Some others are lost but they create the impression they are heading somewhere. You will meet a handful though who have a goal and a perfect picture. They have achieved and would be willing to share their experiences. Go for them. There is nothing wrong following their steps. Ask them how they got through their experience and follow their steps.

Your looking around could get you to books, audios and other self-help materials scattered around you. They may be around but if you do not look, you will not see them. You will have to study them and develop useful virtues from them that will be of help to you now and in the future.

You might have gotten enormous help from looking around but the bulk of the duty is in looking inward. You might have gotten

enormous knowledge from all those persons out there but the onus still falls on you to develop the strength to take action.

A guide might have directed you through the route you will have to take to reach your desirous endpoint but you have to walk down the path you have been directed. These paths may be challenging but the resolute you will have to face them.

The very fact that people have being where you are heading to means it is possible to get there, but you will often hear words such as “you have to be strong”, “the race is not for the weak”, “put yourself together”, “fight hard”. What these phrases mean is that there is work you have to do with yourself.

The only help you will get from outside is possibly direction and guidance but it will take a strongly cultivated will, a passion to achieve, a determination to excel and a decisive you, all these cultivated from the inside.

There has to be an interaction between what you get around and what is within. Information obtained from others or even books are meant to instigate the drive inside. The man inside should be developed such that when the external aids are not available, he could drive you.

There is no place for those who are lost. You only get a place when you have finally reached the last busstop.

You have no reason of excuse for failing to reach achievers height. All you need is already available and you can have them once you choose to look around and inward

# IT'S MAY DAY

I checked the date and discovered how time has flown since the beginning of the year. Already we are in May and it just hits me that I will be having a mayday anytime this month. You may be familiar with the phrase “may day.” It is used to inform the police or any emergency reporting unit of the need for immediate action and help on a life threatening situation. Once the phrase is used, the police de-code and run to the rescue immediately.

April might have come and gone with all its foolhardiness. What we may be left with is a difficult challenging scenario that emerges for us to challenge. Almost everyone I’ve come across tells me how difficult it has being and still is. When we jumped into May, I knew with certainty that some time in May, some help will arrive. Are you going through the normal decline that often characterizes this time of the year? It’s May already!

Life presents us with enormous challenges to throw off our big weights. These challenges may be as a result of our inconsistencies or may just be the normal lows that must characterize life whether we like it or not. If you are down there lost and not too sure of what path to tow, it’s understandable.



You aren't the only one there. People have been there and they know what it's like being there. They are around to offer help. Just know it's only a matter of time before that help arrives.

First things first, you need to get to know the help code. Help doesn't come if we don't ask. Like the use of mayday which actually sends signals that the person is in danger and needs urgent help, you will have to be alert to what you need and then show a commitment to getting that thing you need. You need help? In what area do you need help? What kind of help are you desirous of?

If one does not know what he actually needs, he may be roving in cycles of confusion only hoping that somehow, he will breakthrough even without a destination. A breakthrough often arrives but it's never enough to supply all the help that is required. A mayday call could either be for a fire incident, a robbery incident, a shoplifting incident or even a household accident. So when a mayday call arrives, the guys at the emergency unit often want to know what the actual incident for help is so that they can offer the right service. You can't call out for help and not provide the details for which that help must sufficiently cover.

You need to know who to reach out to. Mayday calls don't go to everyone. They go to the emergency unit where help is

capable of arriving from. Everyone won't have the capacity to help you no matter how much they have within their arsenals. There are selected persons or organizations around you with the capacity to support your project or need. You have to find those persons or organization.

You may know of an organization that offers the kind of help that you need but you have to know the protocol involved to gain attention for that help. That's why mayday is used when calling for an emergency. Once a mayday call is heard at the police emergency unit, it's noted immediately as an emergency and immediate actions are taken. Your need may require that you apply through the right procedures where it will be given the right kind of attention.

If you find yourself in a mess already, you don't have to worry about the situation. Help always hangs around those that know where and how to reach for the help they need however dim it seems. Thank God you have gone through the first quarter of the year. This may, you can begin afresh. You can breathe fresh air and know that help is hanging around. Don't lose hope yet. There is a glimmer of light and an assurance that after this may, you will be having a testimony to share.

Just remember when you reach mayday, help is around the corner.

# MENDER OF SOLES, MEND OUR TROUBLED SOUL

I still find those men with boxes tinkling along from street to street. We used to call them “shoe makers” when we were little but time soon phased that knowledge after we observed that they never made shoes, they only mended shoes like they still do today. Growing up, I had believed that these men had nothing to offer especially as they could hardly speak the local Pidgin English and their trade seemed irrelevant. But I was wrong. I’ve grown up to discover that indeed they were applying succinct principles to success that is worth sharing.

The shoe mender or “Aboki” in the local parlance is the doctor of shoes. Like the doctors who have no capacity to create the humans that they have called to heal, the Aboki lacks the skill to produce shoes. He is unlike the shoemaker who is crafty at creating. The Aboki however finds a place for himself finding value only after shoes have found initial use on the legs of their

user. We often tend to overlook the value we can make because we aren't in the position to make the first impact. Whether, the impact is first or last, it all adds up to ensuring the success of the whole.

One would think these men only find this occupation worthwhile in the city but I find them in my village far away from the city still doing what has become a trademark occupation. What's baffling about them is they do not obey any law of economics where location is considered priority. They believe that there are opportunities everywhere and so it is. Opportunities abound everywhere but we are blind to see them because we think our opportunities should be in blue chip cities. Well, right in my backyard is a money-spinning machine. That's what the *Abokis* will tell you.

Little drops of water could make a mighty ocean, the little N10, N20, N50, N100 adds up to so much at the end of the day for the *Aboki*. He is not often opportune to make one thousand naira in one transaction but he finds contentment gathering the little drops that often adds up to much more than the average civil servant earns per day. We are often pursuing big opportunities that we overlook the small opportunities that could help us achieve even more than the big opportunities we assumed would provide.

You will hardly find an *Aboki* shoe mender on nice clothes. It's not that he doesn't derive pleasure in wearing fanciful clothes, he does wear them on celebrations and worship days.

However, he does not dignify his clothes as priority as he has to walk on his foot a long distance from his home. It's great to look good when you have to look good but when it comes to business, we must put business first before our looks. You can't afford to sacrifice your great opportunity on the altar of looking nice.

*Aboki* Shoe menders look cheerful, simple, and down to earth exemplifying comeliness that often portrays them as weak, however they aren't weak. They understand that business has to be considered in the light of business and they have to be cheerful to their customers. We cannot overemphasize the need for cheerfulness and simplicity in our lives. If one truly wants to be successful in business or anything else, he has to develop a cheerful welcoming mane towards others, putting others first even when they are wrong.

The dedication of *aboki* shoe menders to serving God the way they know best to is commendable. Their time keeping quality ensures they are always just in time for prayers wherever time catches with them. They are never late when God is involved. Dedicating our lives to the creator is a necessary act that puts us at a higher pedestal for success. Our cautiousness at being

punctual is an added advantage. Punctuality is the soul of business

Shoe menders are never afraid to travel far. Opportunities abound everywhere and if it means traveling far to get it, they are ready to take the risk. Sometimes we are opportune to get opportunities from lands beyond our place of abode but we fail to seize on them because we are afraid of our new destination. Kill the fear and get going.

Those men, who mend our soles, could also mend our troubled souls. Learn from them

# MISTAKES: MISSED STAKES TO SUCCESS

I grew up in a fairly hostile environment where mistakes were hardly tolerated. My father was a stern man who we took very seriously; he scarcely smiled with us his kids. We were only privileged to see him smile when he is amongst his friends and colleagues. He often expected that we developed the perfection of an adult which was hardly [possible. If we failed just a sum out of twenty, he would query why we had to fail that one. He expected one hundred percent from us and we were too little to understand that degree of perfection.

I'm grown up now and looking at those years, I've carried that mentality of striving for perfection transferred from my dad to me in everything I've had to do. I've observed through experience that a perfect state is not attainable. As much as we strive towards it, mistakes hang around.

If you play board sports or game, you will recall you have being in a situation when you played a game and observed it was actually the wrong game that should have given the other

player undue advantage. However, you observed too that the opponent was blind to the game you had played and what seemed as a wrong move by you turned out to work for your advantage.

It happens that on the route to success, we are bound to make mistakes. These mistakes are the errors or missed stakes that we hurt our perfectly conscious mind about because we did not get it right or seize the opportunity it should have provided. However the quality of success is not measure by the number of missed stakes or errors that we've come across on its path. It's just a natural phenomenon that mistakes must exist.

I remember the words of an editor of a newsprint company to me years ago. He said, opportunities abound everywhere but your attitude will close your eyes to them. While he was right to a degree, I have observed that Opportunities to succeed abound every time and everywhere but not every opportunity is one's opportunity to succeed. One may think this is my opportunity and he strives putting in all the energy he can garner but it all ends in a waste of energy and time.

I observed too that there are opportunities that we assume the right input has been made and certainly the omen looks clear and opportunities is clear for all to see however it turns out that what you actually played was the wrong cards or input. It could be very hurting and discouraging.



Yet there are opportunities that will arrive that necessarily would not require you putting all the efforts as at other times. These ones often arrive after you have made all the mistakes and have made all the missed stakes and it bears marks of your success all around it. That's when you hear phrases like, "I did not put in as much as I have being putting in previous work yet this turns out beyond my expectations."

The challenge we face though is in actually knowing which opportunity is that rare opportunity of our success. Because opportunities abound every time and everywhere, it's hardly possible to tell which one bears all the marks that we expect to see of our rare opportunity. The best advice then will be to keep trying each opportunity that arrives trusting God for direction, miss all the stakes that has to be missed and make all the mistakes that have to be made.

Success does not always arrive at the first opportunity that we get even though it could happen that way. It comes with all the difficult travails and errors with their corresponding pains. It is however certain that if we truly have to succeed, we will have to make as many mistakes as we can make and we would take decisions too that may not be correct just then even if we assumed we were on track.

It's hard to think success and opportunities in life in this light however we must accept the fact of our existence in life as one

with mistakes and missed stakes all around it for success is only built, one mistake and one missed stake at a time.

# MAGIC NIGHT HOURS

You might have wondered why churches hold vigils, teachers enjoin students to read in the night, witches strive in the night, robbers rob mostly during the night etc. if you never did, I did. As the first son of my parents, much was upon me. I had to carry the family flag high at school but I was such a lazy young man, I wouldn't. I loved to play football and this took most of my studying time.

My dad was a disciplinarian who wanted me always on my books. When he was around, I'd pretend to be studying but on the slightest chance of him leaving the house, that chapter closed. I slept at 8.00pm only when he was not around. However when he was at home, I dare not sleep at 10.00pm. He expected I would have to read my books until late into the night. But I never did. I would doze off and pray he leaves the sitting room.

As I grew into a man coming through the university, I learnt, though it was very difficult, that I would have to use the night if I had to make any progress. I followed nightwalkers to study at the university and I was astounded in disbelief how they managed not to blink their eyes through the night while my

head hit the desk a thousand times. With time, I began to adapt and soon had a grasp of the night.

It seems some secrets about this period of the day elude man. Why is this period recommended for study, prayers etc.?

Scholars are of the opinion that the midnight is the most convenient time for study. They argue that the night provides the serenity required for study. Is it just serenity? Offcourse, we could get to a quiet serene corner of our homes away from distractions in the day and still study. If it is just the serenity, the prerequisite for success won't be the burning of night candles. It's more than that. While burning the midnight candle could symbolize some degree of sacrifice in attaining a success goal, the mystery lies in the spirituality that characterizes the night hour.

Spiritualists argue that there is so much work in the metaphysical realm around the night with spirit beings roaming the atmosphere. They claim that prayers made around this period get speedy answers because the airwaves are free from clogging unlike during the day when the airwaves are so busy. Positive Actions carried out during the night are blessed with the visitation of good spirits who dwell in the actor to cause an extraordinary act, an action that would have being just another normal act during the day. Musicians, writers,

artists, and their likes agree that they find their best creative moments in the nighttime.

Divine guidance often comes during the night rest. God gives prior knowledge of what will be in the future through dreams or visions. He finds that time a great time of communion and takes delight in interacting with us.

As much as there are good spirits, wicked spirits seize the night to deal treacherously with humans. They lurk for human prey and seize the nighttime to cause mayhem on humans. Humans thus can only challenge them when these spirits are effective i.e. in the night, which is the reason for the many vigils. By praying during the night, we break the defenses of the devil and get into their realm of action thereby destabilizing them.

The use of the night could make or mar achievements. It's a difference maker and though looked away by most persons, making good use of the night can be that difference you need to stand ahead of the competition.

You can use the night right.

# ON THE OCEAN TO “JERUSALEM”

Have you had the opportunity to travel over water, on a canoe, boat or cruise liner? Maybe you have or you have not. A journey over water could be especially interesting if you are opportune to travel to a distant country like “*Jerusalem*.” I still dream of porting someday at “*Jerusalem*.” I am somewhere in “the school of hard knocks” praying that opportunity to make this dream comes by.

You have a “*Jerusalem*” you yearn to live in. It could be the dream job, home, spouse, or child. You may currently be at “*down casted land*” praying and hoping the opportunity to visit “*answered prayers*” port comes true. Sometimes you query your mind how you are going to leave “*no money continent*” for “*wealth and riches continent*.” As much as you trouble that weak man inside you, he often tells you how help less you are. The Good news is, a ship just ported and it is taking interested travellers free. You can literally walk into the ship provided you have a “*certified passport*” and a “*visa*.” Are you perturbed? You may be. Littered around us are almost free opportunities.

The problem though has being that we close our eyes to these opportunities and hope that “*our horses*” would appear for a dream ride. Chances are that the answers to what we so want is always so close, closer than we thought. As much as you have these opportunities lurking around, you cannot just jump into them. You have to qualify and get a pass. Your pass is the object of hardwork.

When you do have the visa, its uhuru. Jump straight into this free ship. The visa separates us from the rest. Everyone wants to achieve one great feat or the other but only a handful will go ahead and achieve. Why is this so? This is because only a few can get that visa to “*achievement land.*” Getting the visa could be really challenging especially when you have to get through “*Difficulty consulate.*” However, trust your main man, “*uncle persistence,*” and your madam at the top, “*hardwork.*” You do have to consult them and let them work for you.

Thank God, you have passed the normal rendezvous of dreaming. Now you are in “*possibilities*” ship. Welcome on board friend, its nice meeting you here. You do need a new mentality and some highflying friends so I am introducing you to my main man and pal, victor and his army “*champions team*”. They are off the hook ready to pull along with you to “*Jerusalem.*” Their job is to help people like you with their vast experience as regards issues of life. They are in the right

position to advise you having being where you are and where you want to be.

Here is captain "Faith." Do not mind how he smiles and laughs, he is the best at what he does and he is ready to give you that great ride. You can trust his safe hands to direct this ship. If you do need any help, please call "miss hope." Find "miss comfort" to give you that rest you so need.

I thought we would have a safe ride through this journey having had to get into the best free gift ever. The truth is, even when the conditions are very suitable, challenges often arise. Sure "*mocking storm*" stands before us and says, "You think you can truly succeed in this journey? You must be joking friend." Have no fear; major breakthroughs come after periods of storms. Yeah, you may be querying your mind over what you have done wrong and you might not have done any wrong. The fact remains, that in the oceans of life, storms must rage. You do understand that if you must reach the other side of the ocean you just have to remain calm. Meet aunty "*patience*." I have known her through all the major storms I have had to go through and she has being a good friend.

Thank God, you have made it through the storm. We are nearing "*casting down*" port. You sure know all your fears at this point have to be cast down. Do you like the sight you see? Sure you do. The dream is here. Finally, you can give a grand



smile. The city's sparkling light envelops you. Remain calm do not hurry to rush out. This city often gives people like you a grand entrance. Its inhabitants know that to get here is not easy. Therefore, when you have managed to get over the storms of life, it is worth celebrating.

Welcome the newest entrant to "*Jerusalem*." That is your introduction to Jerusalem. Its mind blowing especially because you had no notion your fate could change within a few moments. Now that you have reached your desired end, take a walk around "*authority*" boulevard. There is none of its type elsewhere. You, once a mediocre person now has enormous power at your disposal, power to make change and impact too. In addition, your home is at "blissful" sea beach. You remember, this is the home you always envisaged you would live in. When you have taken your rest, you will go see your new place of employ. Its "*Destiny*" plc. with a posh limo to suite your executive position. Yeah, I forgot to tell you about that dream woman "*Miss Fortune*" you have always desired but she seemed beyond your reach, here she is your next-door neighbor. We are hoping to see you consummate this relationship.

Here is your new passport. Do not hope to see you return.

# ONE BRIEF SHINING MOMENT

“Don’t let it be forgot that once there was a spot for one brief shining moment that was known as Camelot,” are words from the lyrics of the song “Camelot” sung by Broadway musicals. Like most country songs, this song carries a message. Every one need that shining moment, one heralded moment on the Grande stage, even if it would be for just a few seconds.

We all want the opportunity to raise our head high amidst the crowd and accorded godlike status. We envy superstars, and though we may seem contented with our mediocrity status, something tells us, we deserve to be superstars.

Many persons ask thus, “which time will I shine?” There is so strong a desire to be the attraction which every other persons focus gaze. We desire the remarkable difference, a clothing style, a walking step, a posh car, a tingling tune and the perfect grass to grace story. The often prayer is “I am the next big thing.”

It is not wrong to desire. Having a great desire is the inertia for any eventful achievement. A man cannot achieve more than his dreams. The bad side to this is that many persons have taken their desires too far. You would hear words like, “even if it’s for only one day I will have success, I must have it by all means.” Lust drives these persons, thus endangering their lives through mingling with diabolical powers. They are often attracted to cults and secret societies where the chance of achieving success within the short term is attainable. The problem though with this is that you often find yourself chained by the benefits of your success, and encumbered with a vain deceitful success that you would wish to enjoy. Yes, you would have success but for just a few and not shining moments. You may seem celebrated but you do know right inside you that your success is hurting you.

Imagine finding yourself on the stage of “idols” with the entire crowd cheering at you. Imagine you are having all the cameras focused on you, you are smiling, and waving your hands to the crowd, you do not know. Imagine your name so heralded from the crowd of thousands, persons whose name you cannot tell. You may be singing the song “I wish.” One truth is that everyone shines. Everyone is a star. We only shine differently and have differently window periods where the clouds have to give way to have us shine.

Do you just wish to shine for just one brief moment? Are you not thinking you can live the shining life through your life? We want to shine on and forever. Sit tight presidents want to be presidents for life. They love the shining moments of being presidents. It takes men of character to bow at their most shining moment and to continue to shine. Its good desire and it is the best personal interest you can give yourself. Well, real men may bow out at their most bright moments but that even makes them shine more. They may not be in positions where they had had acclaimed success but their success is measure now no more in the joy of their former position but in their ability to continue to leave their lives outside the position that had given them acclaim. Stories of persons are not farfetched who have fallen from grace to grass after having attained superstar status. Your neighborhood will reveal a handful.

For one brief shining moment, let the world know there was a spot that had being. What matters is not our route to achieving our desirable superstar status. We might have strived or had it on a platter. What matters is what happens when we get there. Do we shine or accept the middle ideology? If you are removed from your current position, who would remember you were once there? Your stay in a place or position may be brief, but reckon of you will be in the hearts you are leaving behind.

Well, life sometimes is brief and we ask ourselves questions like, why should one die at this time? Death is “a necessary evil.” Everyone wants to live long and die at one hundred years. Fantastic if you can reach. But if you die at forty, how about that? The story though is not in how long you have lived, for even in the length, life remains a mirage. It is that in that brief moment of time when you seemed real, what people will remember that they missed about you when you long become a story once told. You may be the next Camelot.

# ONE MORE GREAT IDEA

Do you remember that time when you sat in that class and a teacher or professor asked you a challenging question? Your classmates tried to supply their own version of the answer and the teacher or professor claimed he was looking for something, perhaps a keyword that none of you had supplied and he beckoned on you to think more for that last idea. If some person manage to get it, the teacher would shout bravo.

In life too, there is also a need for that last idea that will count. You might have tried your hands on one or two ideas that you hope to have given you the kind of result you anticipated.

Maybe, you have being pushing on this very difficult task and you have tried all you can about it and you seem lost amidst the cloud of many ideas that you conceived in the process of getting the task done. Well, there is one more correct idea you haven't made.

Life is a conjunction of ideas. These ideas are what mould our everyday actions. Idea like everything in life is relative. There could be good ideas, great ideas, splendid ideas, awful ideas, massive ideas, bad ideas or supernatural ideas. Whatever quality of idea, it is idea anyway.

It isn't every idea that works. Often, it takes the collaboration of many ideas to see the fruition of an action. Some will have to fail, some may offer some help, and some will just be there as an option, but one will stand out. Often that standout idea doesn't come so easy. It takes brain storming, and an increased number of failed ideas.

Many times, we quiver at a task because we think we have stretched our idea level to its limit. Our thought often is that we cannot because we have tried all that we think we have capacity to. This isn't always the truth though. Our brain has huge capacity to think beyond every bar that stands before us. Fact is, we are resourceful enough beyond our normal mental capacity to think extraordinary to that uncommon idea that can and will make all the difference that we want. That idea though will be tested for its efficacy amidst a pool of other ideas and it will stick its head ahead proved and time tested.

Maybe you are lost at what to do to make ends meet. You might have tried your hands on many jobs that had failed to give you that expected breakthrough; well you are one more great idea to a open door. People often give up when indeed they should press on.

You can never be short of ideas; you are only short of thinking. You refused to think more. Ideas are always available everywhere and anytime. That idea to your limelight may be

just under that mango tree if only you would think a bit. Newton's celebrated gravity seemed a mere idea but it arrived from under an orange tree.

Many serious achievements were a result of a one more great idea. Popular soft drinks 7 up, Coca-Cola, and Pepsi have remarkable ideational stories around them. Their inventors never got it right the first time. They might have got the major idea, the development of soft drinks, but they fell short of the ingredients of their drink every time they tried until finally they could shout eureka like 7up the seventh time when the right idea arrived.

What's that challenge that has refused to find solution however hard you try, it just needs the next great idea. Are you searching for job? One more great idea. Do you need a wife? One more great idea. Are you hunting for admission? One more great idea. Are you having a troubling child? Just one more idea. Whatever it is, you think you have done all you should do, you are just one more great idea to a major breakthrough.

You can't afford to stop at working towards the accomplishment of that dream or picture you are seeing. Try idea after idea. Tweak your brain as much as you can, think as fast as you can. That big dream or picture will find the next big idea for its accomplishment. Just try one more time.



# OPEN THAT DOOR: HERE IS THE KEY

Fifteen years may seem such a long time, but in mind's calendar, it's only but a few moments back. I had just being admitted into a public secondary school as a first year student in the junior cadre. It was a new world with a new set of rules and principles. I had heard from senior colleagues the wonders that characterized secondary school life. Cultism and gangsters were major phenomenon. And the phrase "master key", I understood for the first time as a key in the possession of some of the senior students who claimed to be members of one cult or the other. Acclaimed possessors bragged of the key's capability to open all doors.

While I wondered in awe how powerful such a key could be and hoped I would someday have one, rumors filtered across the school that some students had used the master key to break into the school's chief security officer's office removing all seized properties of students. The student who had done this were considered heroes by other students. This gave impetus to the power embedded in the key that I thought it was some

mystic key. But as I grew, I discovered that the master key still had limitations. It could not open all doors.

My search for a key that had the capabilities to open all doors sent me back to my primary school books where I had once stumbled on the phrase “the key that opens all doors.” I dusted a poetry book and opened to a poem that carried a key sign. There it was, I had seen the key. You may be anxious to know what key I’m writing about. I’ll let the cat out of the bag.

I read the poem and watered down the contents. I had read it all those years in my primary school but it was such an anthem we sang. It made no difference then as it made this time.

The poem consist a storyline of twin girls who often visited the house of a nearby neighbor to fetch water. One was Ruth, always welcoming, smiling and wouldn’t pass bye without saying a good morning, good day, good afternoon or good evening. The other Ralia carried an odious face, frowning and never caring to pass a word. This two had always visited this neighbor for water together but on an occasion, the smiling welcoming Ruth was too busy with mama that Ralia had to go all alone. Ralia would often bust into her neighbor’s compound without offering a word of acknowledgement to the gatekeeper. In anger, the gatekeeper returned her with her bucket empty.

Ralia returned home infuriated and filled with pride complaining to her mother and sister what the gatekeeper had done. Her mother sent Ruth back with the bucket. Ruth met the gatekeeper, greeted him, spoke nice words, apologized for her sister's unruly behavior, and got her water home. Their mom turned to Ralia understanding what she had done and said "greeting is the only key that opens all doors"

I mused at the thought of the poem and began to apply the same principle in my life. It's worked wonders. I have seen doors literally open because of my seeming submissiveness even when in reality I am not.

We seem dazed with a decreasing greeting culture especially as more wealth gets into the younger generation. The respect culture is fast waning and money now seems to be the object of respect. This ought not to be. While wealth generation is great, we still need more doors of opportunities that our wealth can't provide us. We cannot afford to close future doors by letting pride take over our head.

The greeting key is a door opener any day. Cultures across the world value this very important part of their culture. A consensus is that those who don't greet are untamed and untrained. These cultures therefore develop greeting body languages as a show of humility and submissiveness. Some cultures bow their heads, some kneel, some lay flat on the

ground, some bow from their waist, others make use of the handshake. A host of greeting styles have been developed by varying cultures because of the importance they hold to greeting.

The power embedded in greeting is an attribute some of the greatest accomplished dictators have applied. It is seducing and misinforming showing off a weak and humane front even for the strongest men. Hitler, Castro, Gaddafi, Napoleon are some of history's finest men who laid siege on the hearts of followers by their charismatic greeting weapon. When they released it, crowd felt safe in their hands.

Greeting can do so much as to get you space at the topmost offices in the country if you apply it rightly. Open your doors. Get the key.

# THE NEXT “OUT OF NO WHERE” STORY

No one loves been considered a “nobody”. We love been acknowledged, respected and celebrated. In us is the often trigger that conditions us towards creating the spectacular personality even when we are not there yet. Some persons assume the big position they would love to live in the present. They claim holding portfolios when indeed they are far away from their dreams. These persons claim faith.

Some others refuse to talk about the future accepting the status quo and pushing further with the big picture in mind. The next group does not have a picture in mind; they accept anything that comes. Whatever class you find yourself, you can truly be out somewhere.

Surprises fills the classroom of life that sometimes, it is not always, what we assume it would be. Take your mind back to when you were a student or if you are still a student, this exercise is still worthwhile. There are students in your class everyone assumed would never do well maybe because of one

disability or the other. These students though beat people's imagination and find their way up the ladder of the class.

Let us take the music and movie industries for example. You must have noticed that most of our celebrated musical and movie stars had challenging backgrounds. They had to hustle and get through all the hassles. Perhaps if you had seen them some years back, you would have written them off as unpromising.

When you listen to a good song, you say wow, who sang this? The musician gets an award and soon goes multiplatinum and his story becomes the perfect grass to grace story.

You may be thinking how you should be the next celebrated genius and you have not gotten there yet. Wait! Let us think. Those who make surprise success never had it on a platter. They had put insidious years in rags unknown to become the celebrated icons they are now. They never slept on the bed of frailty and weakness. They strived hard with all diligence.

Some person might have labeled you worthless and unproductive and you seem dazed by your circumstance. Congratulations, you just had the best gift, a grass storyline. It is a story line, which can change scenes once you choose to act some better scene.

Speak to yourself. Tell the man inside “now I am moving into Grace” and work towards it with zest and tenacity of purpose trusting God to help you.

If you are in doubt of the possibilities you have, go check the list of the top fifty richest men. Most of them were worse than you are now.

Rather than sit down, your hands at akimbo thinking about, who the next big thing will be, what the next big thing will be doing and where it will be happening, you can determine the “who, what and where”.

Your big dream is not impossible. Your small business can be the next Wal-Mart, your small newspaper can be the next New York Times, and your out of place idea can be the rallying point for the next big thing.

Whinstone Churchill the renowned British war veteran and former prime minister of Great Britain had strived to become the prime minister when he was much younger around his forties. He failed because his contemporaries considered his ideas too tough. He kept trying but later gave up retiring from the House of Commons. When the war broke out against Hitler’s German Nazi, Churchill vehemently stood for the policy to fight until the last even when it seemed Great Britain was gone. This was against the opinion of the MPs who desired the on sit prime minister to make a truce with Hitler.

When the war seemed to have prolonged and the prime minister saw he was helpless, he left the seat vacant. He had considered himself a failure. The quest to have a new prime minister began and it was now tough. The royal house did not want to lose the right to their territory. They thought of who would fit the bill. Just then, they remembered the man whose opinion was for the British to stand and fight. Churchill was way past seventy when he became the surprise prime minister.

Out of nowhere, Churchill's irrelevant ideas became the rallying point for one of history's greatest comebacks.

Where you are now is irrelevant. If you stick to your belief, it is only a matter of time before it gets the right ears and opportunity. You may seem in the dark now but know this that you can be the next celebrity with an "out of nowhere" story.



# PERFECT FOR YOUR PURPOSE

Some years ago, I had developed depression thinking how best I was going to fit into society. I grew up with issues and especially my slow growth, which waned my self-esteem, and self believe.

I might have been very talented and with huge mental capacity, but I failed to discover myself coupled with the fact that the words I heard around me were discouraging enough to have me think any way better. I never felt good enough even when I knew my peers were not better either until I discovered I was made with perfection for a purpose. I had struggled with my imperfections until I decided that I would quit fighting them and decide to seize on the difference it gives me and be a blessing to my world.

Over the past few years discovering my purpose, I have interacted with many minds who were suffering the way I had once suffered. When I tell them, just the way they are is perfect, it seems like I am telling them some odd truth.

While growing up as kids, we often had names for those who were extremely big which we termed “biggy or fatty” and those who were extremely thin which we termed “kpanla”. They were not nice names for the bearers especially as they would often stand out for criticism from peers, friends, family and acquaintances. Every one desired to look nice but not every did look nice. Some of us were horrible and if the horribleness was an extreme case, that person would be compared to say a monkey. It was hurting but one could not help it.

I went back to work after getting through my depressed condition and observed after studying enough books that God makes more than enough provision to cover for our perceived imperfections. To God, we have being made perfect. Those things we seem less gifted or incapacitated in, he makes even greater provisions to outweigh the inadequacies that our seemingly imperfection may provide us with.

Reading through Nick Vudicic’s book(the man born without hands and legs save a little limb), I was baffled at how God’s perfection still glows in the face of what I would describe as an impossible imperfection. I call it impossible because it would take an uncommon creative work of God to produce hands and legs for Vudicic yet Vudicic turned that weakness by the grace of God to create a ministry that has spanned the world, a task those of us with hands and legs have failed to achieve.

When God chooses to achieve his purpose, he is not looking for a conforming you. He will not try to make you like the Joneses. He has molded you perfect to achieve his purpose provided he has chosen you for that purpose.

If your head's bald, that's great for your purpose. If you've got talking disorders, that's awesome for your purpose. If you are oversize, that's how you have to be to fulfill your purpose. If you are as thin as a needle, no one's better for your purpose. If you've got reading disorders, it's a necessity for you to fulfill your purpose. The way you are, is the best you should be to achieve your purpose.

Some persons question God on why they were made the way they are. They query him over the reason why they were not born like Mr. A or Miss B. They have seen good attributes in the persons they admire who have accepted their individuality and have succeeded turning their negatives into testimonies. If you have been thinking this way, you really need to do a rethink. Those ones you admire and wish to be like have their frailties too. They only seem to soar because they have come to understand how helpless they are trying to fight those frailties and then they discovered how to apply them for their good.

However way you are, your purpose has been written down before you jumped into earth. Surprisingly too, you have been molded and etched to suit that purpose. Rather than ponder on

how you are, go discover your purpose and push for its fulfillment.

Only you can get your purpose achieved. The faster, you get at it, the sooner you achieve it.

Remember, you are perfect for your purpose.

## THE PRISON BREAK

You will be odd praying to find yourself in the courtyards behind a tall fenced prison wall. It will be dreams paused been found there.

When we watch movies starring prisons, especially those in the United States, we observe the orderly state of the prisons, very comfortable homes for criminals. What we see is very different from those in Africa. You would hear kids say, "If you are placed in an American prison, it's all fun. Prisoners are very comfortable there." It's thought that criminals in the penitentiaries of the advanced world live comfortable lives when compared to that of the average free man in the third world.

The question that pours from my mind is, even in this comfortable state of prisons, why do prisoners move for a prison break? The answer dwells in man's insatiable desire for freedom.

No one loves the barricades of life. Prison walls may not physically bar us but we often find ourselves in situations comparable to prisons. These situations could be the lack of money, social insecurity, ill health, academic regression, failed business, depression or whatever you feel bars your achieving a feat. You may be thinking, how you are going to break free

from the situation that has barred you. What you need is a prison break.

If you have to break free from that encumbrance, you will have to think like the prisoners who plot prison breaks. They begin first with a desire to be free. Do you have a thirst to be free? If you do, then you are set to go. The picture of your free status must fill your mind until all you see is the image of you in that free state away from your encumbrance even though you may not be there at the moment.

Make a plan. Those guys at the prison are often very smart. They look out for security breaches and holes searching for consistency in movement and seizing on opportunity. If they are unable to get all the help they need within themselves, they get from outside the prison. You must have a plan to see your desire come true. Draw out your strategy for achieving what you want to achieve. Get help from books or people who have gotten through similar challenges. Align your thoughts with them.

Hatch the plan. Plans could be great on the drawing board but that's how far it would go except there is an action to see through the plan. This is when the prisoners maneuver their way through the barriers placed by the prison system sticking strictly to the plan. Sometimes though, they would have to make last minute adjustments. You have a plan set out, see

through the plan. Expect some hitches somewhere, which will need little adjustments. There could be strategies that could be helpful that you never thought of until that last twitch so keep your mind open.

Successful? Free prisoners run for their lives the moment they reach the home stretch. They flee the prison area finding solace hundreds of kilometers away. Achieving breakthrough, you move away from your failures to success, weakness to joy, lack to plenty etc.

Not successful? Sometimes it happens that hardwork pushed into a prison break does not yield the required success. Either security personnel get to know the plan or some miscalculation had happened somewhere. You could have worked so hard believing that your entire plan would work out just fine. Great if it does. However, if it doesn't, what will you do? Scream? Off course not. You have to go back to the drawing board and plot afresh.

The only reason you can be stuck where you are is "contentment with the status quo." If you push for a break, it is only a matter of time before a breakthrough transpires.

**PROCRASTINATION: PRO CRASH THE NATION**

Don't wait till 12.00am, a leaflet carrying a picture of a clock read before my eyes. I was so engrossed with interpreting its

meaning that the picture became clear. Time is precious commodity. One can never have enough of it, yet in the face of this startling reality, much of it is wasted. The irony that characterizes time is the thought that there is so much of it. We count many years ahead looking into the future only to be shocked at how much has gone before our eyes.

It seems a normal phenomenon pushing today's actions for tomorrow. We assume that all the time is available to get a task done but we forget that each day comes with its own set of tasks. Every day produces enough for each day. Each day's achievement is measured by how much we are able to get done within the time frame of the day.

Through history, great achievements have been rubbished by the failure of would-be achievers to act when they should. Christopher Columbus' deferment of his desire to cross over from the West Indies to the mainland of America cost him the opportunity to have the continent bear his name. Maybe today the American continent would have borne the name Colombia. Michael Ford's delay at releasing his automobile patent cost him the title "the inventor of automobile" to Karl Benz.

The putting-off of a now event for later has posed disastrous to many military campaigns. Hitler's Nazi Germans' delay at crushing the English brought about the greatest comeback in history and the decline of Hitler and the Germans. The



increasing spate of terrorist attacks across the world is a result of the failure of governments across the world to act when they should have acted.

The power in an idea is when it is carried out now. The only time you have to own your idea is now. We may assume that our idea is ours to keep however, there are many other persons who are also working towards the same idea. The first to get the idea working owns the idea. Researches are ongoing to develop the cure for ailment such as HIV/AIDS, Ebola etc. It would be great if every one of the research centers develop each, their independent cure. However, the first to develop the cure will claim to be the discoverer of the cure to this ailments however much the number of research centres working to find the cure.

The nation needs actors who know what to do, how to do it and are choosing to get it done now. The change anticipated is a change for now. Change isn't for the future. The future change has to begin from each now step. Our anticipation of future change when present actions are not taken is a blind step that is bound to cause some swaying.

Man's tendency towards procrastination is hugely because of his vague understanding of the value of now. Economists know the impending danger of inflation to any project or commodity if it fails to be carried out at the time it was intended for. Often,

developers cost building projects based on present cost and time -frame allowing for allowances in case of inflated price during the period of the project. They are aware that the cost of carrying out a project meant for now will cost less than the same project planned for the future.

The culture of procrastination is fast eating deep into upcoming generations. You'd hear a mother ask her son to carry out a task and the son replying that he would carry it out later. Why not now?

Our nation struggles to find her feet because what should have been done decades back was left undone transferring years of failed task to this present time. If leaders act immediately they discover a little dwindling of service in an area of the economy or society, running the government and the country in general would cost less.

When duties that would be of help to the nation isn't carried out when its most needed and less costly, it lives a costly gap that must be filled in the future. Roads won't fail if the man in charge of maintenance checks on the roads as often as expected and covers potholes before they become gullies. House wont fail if cracks aren't considered too little to be checked.

We must recognize that little actions jettisoned today could lead to catastrophes tomorrow. The time to act is now. Act now, don't delay.

# RAISE YOUR GAME

The phrase “raise your game” is a familiar one. It is common with those who play sports. Coaches often encourage their teams to raise their game, first as individual players and then as a team. They do this because the success of any team depends on the drive of individual players as well their ability to convert individual brilliance into team success and goal.

Coaches acknowledge the fact that there are varying oppositions; big teams, small teams, cup bound, relegation bound, average teams, superlative teams, moneybags, and broke teams etc. teams play to the caliber of challenge they face as opposition. Every coach’s goal is to win the championship. They have to challenge the big teams, mediocre team as well as relegation bound teams and they have to win them all if they would have to win the cup. Coaches acknowledge that “form is not permanent” and with their poise to win, they often encourage their teams with the help of team psychologists. Great teams build in the mentality of their players the fact that they must win against all teams whether they are giants or mediocre. They encourage their players to strive for individual laurels as well as team goals.

In life, we have varying privileges as challenges. Sometimes we face small storms and we easily get over them. At other times, we face giant challenges where we find ourselves helpless. It is not because we are not doing what is expected of us that we fail to achieve our goals, it is often because the challenges has moved ahead of our capabilities. We will have to move one-step ahead and develop a new set of capabilities to be able to challenge them.

Life is inconsistencies filled. As much as we do want that consistency, we are forced to revel in what life brings. Great coaches admit there will always be those moments when players *loose form* and are *game rusty* but they encourage their players to remain focus and work harder. The difference between *great players* and the *middle mediocrity* is that at every point they come down; they do know how to come back stronger than they once was.

We should not accept stagnancy when our challenges are increasingly improving in style. What might have worked before now might just be archaic for the next bout. The fact that we succeeded moments ago using one strategy does not mean it is going to work for every other challenge. Coaches know these so they change strategy with the challenger. We have to be open to dynamics. We have to be open to new ideas and technology

that can put us at constant advantageous position over our competitors. This is what raising your game means.

How do you raise your game? Teams that want to raise their games get new game changing coach if their former coach was not achieving, coaches drop redundant players and go for versatile ones. You cannot quit from life's game. You are coach and player. But you can change factors around you. Students change teachers, people change friends, businesses change location. The essence for all this changes is to make significant improvement.

Now you ask yourself this pertinent question. What are the things I need to quit to raise my game and lift me to the next level? When you do, sincerely outline them on a piece of paper, and then query your mind on how you can quit this things or personalities. Resolve to make those changes and go ahead and do it.

Do not accept the average life when you are worth more. You just have to raise your game and play on the pitches of life's best team.

# RIDING THROUGH STORMY MOUNTAINS

You might have had the opportunity of watching a mountain riding competition. I am especially delighted at the skill, perseverance and tenacity applied by mountain riders to surmount the rough edges of mountains however difficult the terrain may be. I decided I was going to look through to what makes the riders vehement in their pursuit and quest to ride over the great heights and difficult terrains of the mountain side.

It's not unfamiliar metaphor to describe challenges of life as mountains. We are very familiar with mountains not just as that masterpiece of artistic creation of God that stands tall on the surface of the earth but also as an attributive character for which all the challenges of life can be described

I got thinking about mountains after receiving blows of attack against a nursery school, a pet project I had just began. Threats arrived from every side threatening to close the school and place bars to her growth. It didn't seem I would be able to get

through with the next goals and target that I had set for the school. I knew however that somehow, I would get through, but I had no idea how getting through would become.

I discover however that there are silent secrets being applied by those who have made getting across mountains an hobby. I compared my challenge to a mountain and got to learn what these riders applied and apply same too.

First, I observed that mountain riders loved the riding art that it didn't matter where they had to ride, they'd ride any way. I thought that I must be passionate about what I do. Having a strong passion for what you do closes your ears from distractions. I decided that I'd love what I do and stand to defend it against external preys and terrains.

Another observation was that having a passion for riding didn't make the riders successful riders at the mountain. Many persons who were quiet talented at riding may quiver at the mountain. Those persons could ride so well on national tours on tarred roads. I observed however that those who made the mountain their path were the creative ones. They had to find wheels that suited the terrain, and brake systems that wouldn't fail no matter what happens. I needed a bit of more creativity than the normal ordinary way of doing things. I have to think beyond the box for the answers, a thinking process which may arrive from an inspirational source. It dawned on me that some



extraordinary flavor that is capable of outwitting the strategies of those who had set out to hamper my progress had to be developed.

Yes, when challenges come, it helps us think, create and develop new answers that arrive because of the challenge. You can't quiver when that challenge stands before you as a mountain. You just have to find a sit, relax and ask yourself, how you can get around it. The answer is always there, may be in a book store, a friend's creativity or in a parent's advice.

I observed too that the riders acted in the direction of the mountain. They could have a great mountain bike with great brakes and fitted special wheels but that's not enough to finish at the other side of the mountain. They'd have to ride into the mountain. I resolved to challenge the challenges that were arriving rather than quit. I was going to act with the new procedures and ideas that had arrived as part of my tinkering and information gathering process on the challenge and defend myself vehemently. This is the same everywhere. You can't afford to quit because you've reached the seemingly mountain point. Just go ahead and pull them down, one step at a time, one challenge at a time.

You will need to persevere and push hard with all the energy that you can garner. You've got everything that you can have, all the information and all the advice, the creativity and the

skill. What you have to work on is you. The mountain riders know the map and they have the right equipment, they also get the mentality to carry them however steep the edges they face become. They persevere and push till finally they get out of the mountain over at the valley the other side.

What's about to hamper your progress over that project you had started or undertaking? Now you have the key, just ride on any way.

# IT'S TIME TO RESURRECT

For the past months, I had struggled to find my balance. I had being away by the hospital bed of my little sibling until she gave up in my hands. It was a difficult situation losing one person that was life to me. The immediate thought that came to me immediately she passed out was “pray.” I gathered a few brothers of common faith and we began to pray on the hospital bed while the other patients and hospital staff watched in amazement at the miracle that we were purportedly plotting.

I was imagining what could happen once she opens her eyes back to this side of life and what a wonder it would cause. I remembered all the stories of people rising from the dead I had read about and I was certain that God would hear and do something miraculous. Sadly though, nothing happened. It was when she was buried that it dawned on me that she was gone and gone forever.

Two things happen to every human. Everyone is born into the world and everyone dies. I had certainly concluded in the

school of thought of Wiseman Solomon that life is totally vanity, and hopeless until I discovered that there is always a resurrection chance. Oh, I was told that I would see my sister again at the resurrection morning if I managed to live the life that would allow me that opportunity, but that's by the way.

I have come to observe that death doesn't necessarily mean passing out. There comes a time in everyone's life when something dies in us. At these times, talent becomes useless and capacity that we had once developed loses value. Some kind of emptiness arrives that keeps us struggling and unable to find our footing. These could be caused by external factors that tend to deprive us of our joy and happiness. These moments are dead moments.

I had struggled with writing. I had plotted my graphs and expected that I was on a path to breaking through on my goal as a major writing voice when I reached a lull and couldn't put up the pieces of myself together. I had almost thrown the towel and given up in that pursuit however the hard work and research that had gone into developing myself. I knew that in the last few months, I had lost my writing voice and needed some propellant to pull me back to that time when the muse arrived every single day. I got it in the words of one of my mentors, "if you can write, get up and start writing, if you don't use your hand, you will make God handicap."

You may have suffered my fate in a somewhat different scenario. You might have come to that dead end where you have given up on that fantastic opportunity or chance not necessarily because you chose to but because life's situation hit you really hard and you felt like what you really had on those hands of yours are dead. The good news is, there can and will be a resurrection if you just look away from what had caused the death of skill and talent towards the opportunity and vision that had once heralded your pursuit.

If you think you are dead somewhere, you really are. That vision doesn't have to die because situations now have challenged its continuity. You have to make it rise again. So much as there is life in us, nothing stays permanent except we choose to allow it remain the way it is. Revive your passion, return to that position of best function, and continue to do what you know best to do. Great visions have to face the test of time, the lulls to prove they are indeed visions.

The true test of whatever goal or vision we intend to achieve only comes during those times when we are losing sight of the propulsion that once characterized the goals, that time when all we can do is just to stand and watch while our dreams and aspirations fall apart. It is at this time, that the substance of that goal arrives and how much we believe about it.

Don't just let that quality skill, talent, vision or aspiration lie dead. It's time to reawaken it. It's time to tell it "resurrect"

# SACRIFICE: YOUR SCAR TO RISE

If you grew up with younger siblings, you will remember that time when you were little; your parents would require that you gave up something you considered too precious because your sibling wanted it. It hurt you then to always think that you should be the one giving or sharing what you had while your younger siblings had all of theirs to themselves. Your mom would always say, can't you let that go?

This happened to me. I had two little siblings who I had to share everything I had and I still do now. However little as biscuit may be, my parents ensured I shared it into three and had them have their share or give it up entirely. Somehow the virtue stuck with me.

Every religion teaches sacrifice as a good virtue. We are taught by our religious clergies to give in support of religious, godly or societal causes. Some clergies even go ahead to tell their followers to throw all they have sacrificially as that is where the

blessings arrive from. Some religions have statutory percentage of one's wealth that should be offered in religious service.

There is truth in the fact that there is great reward for those who give. Society is filled with many needs to be met and many needy who need to be offered help. The needy and the needs have continued to increase; to check it, givers who can give sacrificially are required. Givers never lack and those who give to a just cause certainly get rewarded.

The road to great achievements is coated with so many needs that require we give something up. Those who gun for real achievement go through the road light. One can't go up heavy so they give up what they have every time they have so that they can be light to travel up the road.

Giving is great when one has so much and to spare. We often wish we had enough so that we can spare. Often, there is never a time when there is enough. As humans, our needs are insatiable so we continually complain of money or resources as not being enough. In spite of the limitation of the wealth or resource in our disposal, we are still expected to give. This is sacrifice.

Those who have risen to the very top acknowledge that it takes so much of giving, giving quality resources that seem almost impossible within limited resource. These resources may be



time, money, or any other resource that causes pain when given out.

Society tends to celebrate givers. They are called philanthropist. Many persons have had this great tag added to their name because of their persistent giving to meet the needs of people around and beyond them. In a world ravaged by poverty, sickness and war, there is a constant expectation on every capable and well meaning person to give to the cause of helping meet the needs that result from these challenges.

No achievement comes easy. No star shines without a scar. It takes years of paying the price. Sometimes one may have to go hungry, sleep very late, loan some money, or be insulted. The story to every great achievement always has some “I gave up these or that up” story as part of the bargain. Sometimes it hurts going through this horrible period of one’s life but it certainly pays.

Men such as Mark Zuckerberg CEO of Facebook and Bill Gates of Microsoft, men of note who are contemporary success stories have revealed what it has taken for them to achieve the great feat they are achieving today. They always reckoned with sacrifice as the crux. They gave everything to gain everything even when giving was considered odd. Even today, both are giving to support global causes the world over.

Sacrificing isn't really easy especially because it requires so much of all we have and everything within our means and beyond it. We are not prone to offer everything. We love to give part and hold on to part so when there is an expectation to give against our wish, we cringe. Yet there is a huge responsibility to give that all that is our best.

The extent a man sacrifices is the extent of love that he shows towards what he is sacrificing for. If you love a person or a thing, you'd be ready to give everything even beyond your means to create the needed satisfaction.

Of course, sacrifice will hurt, but if there are no scars, you will never rise.

# HERE'S LIFE'S TELESCOPE

Those little years as a pupil in primary school, I was so engrossed with geography. I loved the sights of maps and planets. I took my time to study them even to their minute details. It was an interesting experience as I wondered how scientists managed to see beyond the atmosphere into space. My inquisitive mind wondered from books to documentaries. Thank God we had DW Deutch Wielden, a German television whose science programs were being rebroadcasted on one of our local channels. I got to know that scientist had the opportunity to see space through the eyes of a telescope. They saw beyond the common eye.

Those who go far in life see beyond what can be seen. They see the future from today through the telescopes of life. They see the beauty of tomorrow far away from today's rough patches and they are determined to experience that tomorrow. Others may not have the same view sight and that does not deter them. What they know is, they have seen what others cannot see. That's what propelled the first astronauts to make the first

journey out of space. They had seen the beauty of space from the lens of the telescope and they were determined to experience it firsthand.

No matter how challenging present time may seem, and how people may attest to the impossibility of a present challenge, the possibilities of the nearest future is beyond your normal comprehension. You will have to develop an aided sight. If you are opportune to be empowered with that extra aid, your view becomes farther, your gaze improves and so the thirst for reaching that future you have seen with your aid.

The telescope brings the farthest unseen far object in space to a present big form allowing for analysis of the object which the natural human eyes won't be able to see. The telescope is like faith. Faith brings about the present realization in a huge way of the future desire. It brings in object form an inexistent yet hopeful desire. Faith helps one live each day in the future desire.

The fact that the scientist has a telescope does not mean he can use it. Having and using are two different scenarios. If you have it, you must learn to use it and use it right. There is the capacity to develop faith and focus in every man, however, one must learn to apply them the right way to yield the kind of results required.

Scientists analyze planets and stars without having reached there. They know so much of a planet yet have not stepped an inch into it. That's the power of the telescope. You can analyze that your great future, know what it contains without having reached there. You can have a sight at your future house, car, family, child, degree etc., even if you aren't there at the moment. Knowing what is packed in that package called tomorrow helps you focus however what may come around to take you off.

Telescopes are of sizes based on the distance the scientist intends to reach. Farther distances require telescopes of larger focal curvature. The extent of the future you want to have in your hands is dependent on developing an increased expectation. The bigger your expectation, the bigger what you get. You can't live beyond what you expect.

The telescope has knobs to either increase or decrease the distances between the lenses so as to increase or decrease its focus. You must develop an increased focus. The more you focus on the future, the clearer it becomes and the stronger the motivation to succeed at what you focus in.

Those who get the best from life are those who have the capacity to see beyond what present pictures may offer. The future may be great or worse but the telescopic man puts himself to profit most in all situations because he has seen

them all. He has seen the movement of economics, finance, instability and opportunity today that is walking towards a future occurrence so these helps him find opportunity by placing himself ready for the future endpoint. It is for this reason we often claim that a man has foresight.

The possibilities of tomorrow are huge to the man who will develop an eye to see beyond today. You need the eyes of the future, you need life's telescopes.

# SLOW AND STEADY WINS NO RACE

You may recall that childhood folktale that features the tortoise and the hare, the slowest and fastest animals respectively. The folktale carries that both animals undertook a race at the expense of the hare who considered the tortoise too slow to challenge him. Tortoise had disagreed with hare's postulation and welcomed the challenge. Tortoise against all expectations defeated the hare.

Our teachers who shared the story to us would often say that though the tortoise was slow, its steadiness ensured he won unlike the fast but inconsistent hare. They'd conclude with "slow and steady wins the race"

We have grown up with folktales like the tortoise and hare and have accepted the belief that we have to be slow and steady to win in life's race. You'd hear some person say, "Bob, slowdown, only the slow and steady wins the race."

Growing up, I've observed the contrary. I've observed in the race called life, the slow and steady have no chance. They'd

have to wait till the fast paced rat raced world that we find ourselves in today becomes slow paced.

Imagine an athlete on a race to win, running slowly when everyone else is racing off and saying to himself; “Bob, just continue in this pace, only the slow and steady wins the race”. He’d get nowhere before the race is won and lost. The athlete who wins begins the race at full swing and increases pace steadily till he wins.

We are continuously in a race whether we accept its reality or not. We may be individual individuals with characteristic traits yet we find ourselves having to compete and survive on the same running track. We wouldn’t say we are not well equipped enough or we aren’t as talented as the other guy. The tortoise and the hare were differently talented yet they had to run on the same track. We’d just have to find a way around the track and ensure we win in spite of the capacities of the other candidate.

When you seek to challenge, you must take off the mask of starting slow and remaining slow through the track. You’d have to start with a full bust and develop steadily improving your capacity to give you the chance of ever winning. Your competitors have learnt lessons from the hare that lost even when he had capacity. They won’t want to be rubbished by a tortoise, and you sure won’t like to be a slow and steady



tortoise. You'd like to be the hare that has learnt that he has to start with full speed and continue till he wins without underrating his competitor.

If you are at a job, you'd want to develop your skills by taking courses and improving your capacity to put you at pole position for promotion when the opportunity arrives. You don't want to count years for your promotion, which will be slow and steady, like every four to five years when there is chance you can get a double promotion like every two years.

If you are at a business, you won't want to remain at a shop when you can get a bigger mall and even open branches, in the name of slow and steady. You'd want to go all out to get the customers and keep the customers running to you rather than your competitors by applying all the business strategies that you can garner.

If you are a student, you can afford to go all out for the A grades and keep the grades going by continuously studying rather than being satisfied with Cs and hope in the name of "slow and steady wins the race" that you'd come through with a first class.

We must resolve to develop a fighting consciousness. Fight, fight and fight. You must not show weakness in the battle to stay alive and win. You must not be satisfied and content with where you are and then hope tomorrow becomes better. You

must fight for tomorrow today. You'd have to tell yourself that you have to be strong today to be even stronger tomorrow. Tomorrow is when the race will be finished and your fast pace today will help you get to tomorrow faster.

Why would you choose to wait and spend longer time at getting what you want when you can go grab it now? If you deserve it, you must go take it. If you wait, a faster person will get it before you. Remember, slow and steady wins no race.

# YOUR SIZE DOES NOT MATTER

As students in my high school many years ago, my colleagues and I often held this belief that those who were diminutive often caused the most trouble and made the most noise. I wanted to see for myself so I began to study such people. One was my English teacher, a 3.11 ft woman. She often made my peers and I go through difficult English problems and we dared not provoke her else we'd go through rigorous punishment.

Most of us disliked her often because when she got on her nerves she would shout at the top of her voice evoking spasms of fear distances away on us. Her behavior didn't seem parallel with her simple diminutive look. We agreed that she was feigning that seriousness just so that we will respect and fear her. I've noticed similar attributes with people this type. They often try to force their ideas and ensure they are the sources of attention.

Life has an open check for everyone however the debacles around. The size or status of a person has no immediate effect

on the treatment life gives. Whether tall or fat, short or slim, it welcomes all. However, human factors have limited what we get out of life. Human factor sees from the natural eyes of size and height. We tend to measure capacity by the outlook of a person. We think because one is short, he lacks the capacity to carry out a task as a tall person would. This thought process is inconsistent with the capacity imbedded in even the most disadvantaged person.

This seeming disadvantage is a great advantage which has to be proved. That's what diminutive persons try to show in their having to shout at the top of their voice to gain recognition. There is a natural tendency to overlook them wherever they find themselves mixed with people of average or tall heights. Their thinking is, they may be short but not short of ideas and capacity.

One fact is our size can make us popular. You get nicknames such as "fatty", "biggy", "shorty", "tally" or "thinny" from your host of admirers. It's all too glaring for the diminutive man who instantly gets the tag "short man," and has to live with it all his life. It could be depressing carrying this tag but he manages to come around it acknowledging that he has no capacity to create himself or change anything about himself.

His incapacity at making himself look the way he'd love to physically, forces him to develop capacity in other areas of his

life so that he can take attention away from his physical nature. He often is very good at what he does developing a degree of importance anywhere he finds himself. This attribute makes him a somewhat leader even over those who are far above his height. He tries to develop a good sense of perfectionism that is considered odd for the casual mind of his average or tall counterpart. This is because he wants to prove he can do above his taller counterparts, a major motivation.

People of diminutive nature find delight at licking their tall counterparts. They often prove they can match them level for level and skill for skill. They show they can do great things that their other peers do and even greater.

However your size or disability, there is an ability hidden underneath that makes you stand out. Think dwarf David and the giant Goliath and you would understand that doing great things isn't about how big you are. It is about what drives you.

Developing the right drive is consistent with those who truly want to do great things. Your ability to achieve something great is developed from a kind of spurring or stimuli which could be external or internal. The external stimuli results from the propellant cause by friends, colleagues, family, books, audios, videos or any other factor outside you. The internal stimuli results from your mind work, your quest to achieve against any

odd which is often instigated by a feeling of discontentment with the status quo.

Don't quiver at the largeness of a task because of your seeming disability or inferiority as compared to others. Fear is the only factor that militates against any one whatsoever and you especially. Once you can get over your fear, you can do great things.

You are not small. There's a big you in that small case.

# THINK BEFORE YOU JUDGE

If you've attended or watched a court case, this writ is familiar terrain. Some years back as a little boy, I had fancied becoming a lawyer. I loved the respect and aura that characterized the profession; however I had struggled with some deficiencies. I wasn't quite vocal and I seemed the science oriented type with strong genius in mathematics and vocational aptitude. But I had always had the longing to have justice reign in our one-sided, biased and ruthless society.

It seems characteristic of our pervasive society, truth has lost its place. A lack of order pervades the system and we feel contented with the norm that this pervasion is becoming. We call it the "naija factor". Overtime we have developed an overwhelming welcoming mane towards any behavior untoward. This reflects in how we overlook the quest for truth and support mischief. Whether in our family, amongst friends, with our neighbors or acquaintances, these societal deficiencies reveal themselves in no small measure.

Conflicts find their way into relationships however well the strife to protect it. A third party often acts as mediator like you have the judge having to stand in between the lawyers of two conflicting parties in a court case. The judge often has to be impartial while he strives to listen to both parties build their facts and reasons why each party should be considered ahead of the other. In some cases though, we've had judges or mediators who give faulty judgments thus favoring the wrong person to the detriment of the other based on faulty premises made available to him.

In family relationships, conflicts abound though of the informal nature where maybe a parent has a challenge with his child and they both have to seek things out. A third party who sometimes may be the other parent or relative tries to help out in the uniting process. In most cases, what happens is, there is a skew towards offering judgment to favor one party against available evidence.

Our society is often entrenched in conflict. These conflicts begin with simple disagreements which could have being resolved in more traditional ways. However, these conflicts escalate dew to bias judgments. The person who acts as judge chooses to hear just one side of the story and act on this story. Life's experience has shown that we cannot afford to listen to only one person or



side in a conflict. It pays to listen to both parties. It allows for credibility.

The results of bias judgments has being catastrophic. Bias judgment of an event can have lasting implications like a feud between brothers, a breakdown between business partners, a lack of collaboration between team members etc. However, when we listen to everyone's voice, one is able to give sound judgment for the overall good of the group to which he belongs, thus discouraging apathy.

Don't conclude on an event or issue when you have not gotten enough evidence to back up your conclusion. When the premise on which your conclusion is based is faulty, it's only a matter of time before cracks are noticed.

Get adequate knowledge and vary opinions. People's conclusion on a matter may vary and always varies. This is because, their knowledge bank defers. See reasons why they think differently, accept their difference, and see how to align the difference for the entire good of everyone.

One truth is that the story can only be complete when one tells it from his angle and another from her angle and then their individual stories are combined to produce the big hit complete story.

Before you make that conclusion, be sure you have heard all the sides there is to the story.

# STAY AT IT

Staying put at a project could be very difficult especially when you are handicapped of the necessary training that could enable you get through the project. Even when all the training and facilities are at your disposal, there is still the tendency towards worry and anxiety that pushes you to taking irrational paths away from or at tangent to the intended path.

Worry and anxiety are couples. They produce “time waste” as offspring. You lose your sense of direction been inflicted with inconsequential thoughts that demean your previous achievements. You become blind to future opportunities.

Now, you have started a project; it could be academic, work, church, building etc. As you build block for block and step for step, this often happens. Challenges arise. Some are planned but most unplanned. If planned challenges arise, you might have developed antidotes to check them. But what happens when unplanned challenges arise? Do you worry about them? No.

Here are some nature lessons. Go look at the ants.

Isolate an ant, place it around a dead cockroach, and watch what happens. The cockroach is bigger sized and would pose a challenge for the ant to move it and then get it into its hole.

The ant would first survey the cockroach, measure its size and then tries to drag the cockroach as much as it can. Often the ant acknowledges its limitations but never worries about it. It goes get some extra help from other ants who come running.

If you stay longer and follow through the movement of the ants, you will observe how they strive to pull the cockroach. When they finally get the cockroach to the hole, they observe that their hole only suites their size but not that of the cockroach yet they never worry or develop cold feet. Rather their thinking faculty comes to play. Somehow, the cockroach will have to get in. It's often a big project for the ants but they stay at increasing the size of the hole. Slowly, slowly, the cockroach gets into the hole and finally disappears as the ants return their hole to its initial size.

The lesson derived from the ant situation is that you do not have to worry about the challenges you may face or are facing at that project. Stay at it. It's only when you stay put and tackle the challenges that you get a breakthrough.

Many persons cannot focus. As their projects begin, they expect it to go smooth sailing. They expect and believe they have acquired all the training that they require. They may even

be the best acclaimed around. Nevertheless, that does not stop challenges. Challenges have no respect for qualifications or training. What happens is; the bigger the qualifications and the training a person has gotten, the bigger the challenges that strive to rubbish how much they know.

If you must overcome your challenges, then patience is a much-needed virtue. You have to create patiently solutions devoid of worry or anxiety. Worry and anxiety create double troubles. They delay you over a task that would have taken a few hours of patience to achieve. You may leave the task altogether because you have doubts about your capacity to get it done and only after many years of getting it wrong and rediscovering yourself will you come to discover that you had made a wrong choice of allowing worry and anxiety take supreme place. By this time, you would have lost precious assets.

Worry blindfolds us to opportunities. We bring yesterday's failures, today's troubles and tomorrow's challenges into our minds allowing them press us until we can't see the light that's shining all around us. We run when no one's pursuing because we anticipate that someone will always be pursuing when in reality no one's behind our backs. We create trouble and more trouble when we develop worry and anxiety.

How do you get your mind off worry and anxiety? You have to find a friend and talk your problems out. Its sometimes difficult

if you are of a particular genre of human species with temperaments that ties you towards self. However, you can't afford to stand alone and suffer from your choking inadequacies. A good friend will offer tangible help and strength when you are failing. If you are married, your wife and children could be sources of strong encouragement.

You will also need spiritual solace. God is the absolute solace for your life. By drawing near to him, you find relief in drawing close to him as often as you can. Developing a good relationship with God is the inspiration you need to propel you into carrying out any project however difficult it may seem. When you trust God, he sees you through the odds.

Develop a cheerful and grateful disposition. Keep a fat smiling cheek. It helps to ease your heart's ache. Always try as much as possible to show gratitude however little a deed. You will always see life as unending miracles and you a part of it with your own testimonies. This will help you see your challenges as another miracle about to give you a testimony to enable you show gratitude.

Its time you gave worry and anxiety an uppercut. Stay at that project and see it succeed.

# STEP FOLLOW STEP

Do you remember having to climb some steps when you were young, or as a student rushing for lectures towards your lecture theater or yet still rushing towards your office at the top floor of the office complex? As kids, we often took delight in running the staircase of the three-storey apartment of our neighbor. We made it a competition in which the first to reach the last floor was declared winner. Over time, we developed techniques for climbing. We would jump steps. I could remember vividly having to come down more than once with an injury on my knee. My friends like me also had their share of injury troubles. I observed that the person who often won never came down. He often took each step at a time, and very carefully. Today having grown, I have observed the similitude of those growing days with attributes of present day. We all want to get to the top even if it means having to cut corners and break rules. In our quest to achieve a feat, we are often tempted to seek for ways through which we could achieve the task with ease. We have grown up thinking we could jump 2 or 3 steps to the top that we fail to realize that in life's rules, step must follow step. Infested with the rat race syndrome, the killer syndrome catches up with us that we fail to acknowledge the cliché "slow

and steady wins the race." Today, the statement is, "the slow and steady wins no race." There is an increased tendency to grab and get even if we are not qualified for it.

I observed during my years as a kid climbing the staircase of that three-storey building for sport, that when we manage to climb each step at a time we often got to the top even though we might not have ended first. Those of us who rushed up often came down with injuries that did not give us the opportunity to run again. The truth about life is that the space at the top is so wide as to contain everyone even if you arrive later than the first. It can contain as many persons as take their time. We may not have reached first but we can still enjoy the benefits of being at the top when we finally reach there.

There is always another opportunity to run even if we do not win today. We should not lose the opportunity to run in the future Grande life race for the mediocre primary school inter-house sport. Present glory may be great but the future glory is even greater. Though we so desire to win in every race, we may lose the future grandeur if we choose to lose our senses thinking the present race has to be won by all means even if it means taking our lives.

Have you heard the cliché "what you rush into rushes you out"? When we break the rules, the rules find a way to break us. The likes of Ashaka Powell famous 100m sprinter, who once had numerous gold medals to his name and Nick Jones famous



bicycle racer, who was once the world's renowned cyclist and numerous gold medalists at the Olympics are testaments to this fact. When you break the rules, people may herald you presently for your championship attainment; but the rules know how to get at you.

We take the steps to our future glory, one rational step at a time. You do not just climb without any thought. The steps are often thoughtful steps. You should realize that there is a chance you could slip as you climb so your mind and soul should drive your pursuit towards your climb up. As you climb up, the intensity of the wind increases. These winds are challenges that battle against your moving ahead. This is normal. You have to absorb the wind each step of the way. If you jump steps, the wind at the particular level may be too strong for you, thus pushing you backwards with strong ferocious force. Your body adapts to balance the wind with each step. It is only when you absorb the challenges of the present step are you considered good enough for the next step. This is why a child does not jump from junior secondary one to senior secondary one. He has to go through the steps of two and three.

To ease your way to the top, you have to ensure you walk every step up. It is better you are considered worthy of a promotion where in this case, a hand pulls you from your present step

across one or two steps. In this case, a hand offers help to pull you against the storm and offer the balance you would have had to develop if you had taken those other steps. When you strive for the attainment of the goal that is beyond your capacity, and break corners, you waste useful energy and often end up wasting your time.

The best you so desire is you acknowledging you have to strive for it climbing the stairways one-step at a time.

# STONY PATHS OF LIFE

Of late, I reminisced my childhood days having stumbled upon two little boys hurling stones at themselves. I vividly remember “*Stone harvesting*” as a habit we developed as we grew through those tender years. We would gather stones for game hunting, sport, and fun. We did not understand the “*stone principles*” but we derived so much pleasure from using this very common piece.

Reading the Bible, I observed that God had used stones as a weapon in humbling very powerful persons in ancient times. The giant Goliath died from a stone from little David’s sling, Abimelech was hit by a grinding stone thrown by a powerless woman. The stone found use in the hands of very powerless persons undermined by the brutish forces of their enemies. As kids, we might not have had great munitions, but we did find the stone a great weapon we could depend.

My peers and I often competed over who had the longest throw. It was often the mini discus competition where each one of us had a stone, and we threw over the field of our primary school. For the stone to get far, many factors affected its movement. The thrower had to develop a poise as well as

balance and hope the wind moves in his favour. Like the stones in the hands of my childhood peers, we are stones in the hands of the master thrower, God. The master thrower determines how far we can go. He is poised to see us turn out the best we can be and not lacking in skills, his matchless grace catapults us far into the future, a great-achieved person. Though, the winds of storms may rise to challenge our future goals and achievement, the master thrower God has ensured he throws you to get through the storms undeterred and unwavering towards the future end point. When God throws you, you can be sure of reaching the successful winning point.

Many persons have taken positions as “*stone throwers*” in our lives. As much as they do have ability to throw, earthly limitations such as “*gravity*” and “*wind motion*” limits how far they can throw. Their throw are often inefficient thus causing you to change hands during the period of your lifetime. You have to move from one thrower to another. Your parents transferred you to your teachers and you had numerous teachers through school. They were all stone throwers. Where one stopped, another took over from there. God is different. He gives you one long throw into *safe land*.

As part of our childhood games, we went game hunting. We hunted birds. We aimed birds while they chirped on tree branches or flew. It was great having a small bird in ones cage

and we accorded that person some degree of respect for such heroics. We aimed our stones towards the birds and hoped that the bird came through our stone path. You must have an aim or goal to which you develop poise and hope to reach. Often we never caught any bird but that never deterred us. We would rest and return yet for another “*aiming bird*” duel. It was often a feat if one of us caught a bird. In life, you do not give up because what you are doing is not working currently. You have to persist and achieve that feat. Persistence helps us achieve great feats.

Some of us kids perfected the art of throwing our stones after some gruesome periods of failing to catch a bird. These kids finally developed tactics of aiming having studied the birds’ motion and movements in the sky. Their chance of hitting a bird increased and soon they were catching bird after bird in succession. The reason for this achievement was that they continued at it. What makes true champions is regular practice and continuous persistent action even when we are not getting it right. To become renowned, you need some good dedication.

You are familiar with that cliché “do not throw stones in the market; it just might hit your mom.” Our guardians used to tell us that. Be careful. Do not throw stones here. Do you want to hit some person? They would say. For some of us, we cared to listen, but some others did not and the outcomes were often

horrible. Not every place is suitable for throwing stones in. We often had to watch out for “*glass houses.*” Stones are thrown into open spaces where there is just enough chance it would not hit anyone. God is throwing you into open opportunities where you can make impact. He does not want you to crash. He is offering you ample space to act and explode without competition.

Great buildings are little stones joined to create such giant edifices. Little stones do great things if you let them do. Next time you see a little stone, remember, they are the remarkable tools of life, though minute as they may seem, but full of lessons.

# LETS TAKE SOME DRIVING LESSONS

Can you imagine a driver sleeping off while driving and suddenly jerking as his vehicle hits a bump? Imagine you are on the passenger's seat by the driver. What would you be doing the moment the vehicle hits the bump? It is certain you would fret and probably ask the driver to drop you. If you find yourself in such a situation with a valid driver's license, you would probably consider sitting on the driver's seat.

Let us place this scenario side by side with our lives. Many persons lead their lives in an awkward fashion such that they create a disaster for those who associate with them. This awkward lifestyle pushes them to a state of irresponsibility and finally they lose control of their ability to think for themselves.

Some other persons or even the government takes driver seat in their lives and they become chained to being led for as long as they can get off from their sleep. The many lives in our penitentiaries are testimonies to this. These persons often come back to their senses but they have long lost control of

themselves and their direction and feeling tired of their new lives, they push for a prison break.

Inside every man and woman is a seat for the driver. Either you take that seat or someone sits there for you.

If you own a car, you are careful not to drive roughly. Parents fear giving their teenage wards their car key. They often have doubts about their wards capability to drive safely even when they have a valid driver's licence. The reason is that they want to preserve the vehicle.

The truth is a driver can only guarantee himself as the best for his vehicle. Do not expect something dramatic when your life is led by the whims and caprices of some other person. They first would protect their interest before yours and that is if they remember.

Your life is most precious only to you and you want to live life as comfortable as you can think. You know the route to the place you would want to get to and you know how to get there. You have developed the driving skills. Come on! What is stopping you? Be the driver, everything around you depends on you.

What are the driving skills? They are all the talents imbedded in you and all the training you have acquired through school and practical experience. Your skills cannot be useless when



someone else is making so much out of it. There is so much in you, which can help you lead a responsible achieving life.

Driving could be great fun when the roads are smooth. However sometimes, we face bumps and potholes which pose as hindrances that slow down the driver. Yet the driver of the vehicle been aware of this drives to dodge the potholes and protect the vehicle.

There are potholes in everybody's drive to achieving success meant to drag us and slow down our pace. These potholes may come in the form of negative friends and ideas which if we are not careful, could damage our efforts. We have to be always conscious as drivers of our lives to avoid these potholes when we see them. This may be challenging but it is not impossible.

Drivers are poised to reach the other end of the road regardless of the potholes and bumps. Developing a winning poise puts us at the right position to overcome every challenge we could face on our journey up.

Drivers take care of their vehicles to ensure the vehicles serve them for long. To understand the concept of staying successful, you must take charge of the individual personality called you. If you are sick, you would probably not be able to carry yourself to the height you want to be. Good body hygiene and

maintenance is necessary to remain bouncing for the rest of the journey to the top.

Obey road signs says a traffic warder while directing drivers. There are road signs directing our lives every step of the way to the top. These signs are there to guide and direct us. While moving up we must watch out for the road signs.

We must be conscious of road signs as they serve as warning against any disastrous occurrence. This road signs are like teachers, articles like this one, spiritual leaders that come along our way to offer words of wisdom and encouragement. These are persons sent by God to direct and mentor you towards the right direction.

When it seems you are lost of direction and you do not know which path to take, find them. They sure have been there and they will show you how to get there.

# THAT MISSING PIECE: YOU NEED IT

I struggled over a board puzzle with a couple of my kid friends some time ago. This took me back to when I was a kid struggling with the same game. While the fun lasted, I had for the first time understood the underlying workings that characterized this puzzle. We were trying to create animals as outlined in the game guide from the bag of little shapes and we did succeed in creating the animals but we had challenges coming around them. The challenge was, there was always this missing piece.

My little friends had lost some of the shapes so this posed a challenge. While we maneuvered our way trying to create, we observed that we could not always get the whole creation finished because one or two pieces that would have being useful were gone. The kids would mourn “oh! Uncle, its very beautiful but.....” and I’d reply “sorry, we need the missing piece” and we would end there pursuing a new task because the missing pieces were often far away from their search light.

Life is like the board puzzle. It's never the perfect picture until everything is up and running. That slight missing piece is enough to rubbish the whole work and cause a sigh. You've heard people say "it could have being great but.." and perhaps you might have said so yourself.

Many times, we build our lives with incomplete pieces. "No one can ever be perfect", we argue and stroll away into life with the mentality of our self-confirmed imperfection. We say "If I don't have that, it doesn't matter" and we agree to our blind eyes because we cannot see the possibilities that surround us. Even when we seem able to supply that missing piece that could make us more complete, we agree with our lazy mind that it is not possible and so it is.

Whatever could make you that more complete person that you are struggling to be is truly a must have. There is that perfect you, you wish you can be and which you have being working towards all these years. You have worked so hard fixing all the pieces and finally you are beginning to see the perfect picture. How about the final pieces? Find them, you need them.

Personally, I struggled with my personality for some time. I had these big picture in mind and these really possessed me. But I had to grow and I'm still growing. I started fixing my pieces, learning to speak, developing an aura etc. I was beginning to look complete, or so I thought. I had a piece to fix, my dress

sense was terrible and I struggled. People complained but my big ego thought that's just an imperfection. We cannot be all good, I'd assure myself. I was wrong, something could be done to fix that piece if I had decided to fix it but I was all too blind.

We can be better than we are now. The perfect picture is all too glaring but the imperfect you has to reach it piece by piece. Don't mind if some pieces are difficult to find at the moment maybe because of your financial constraints and perhaps limitations that debars you. You have to fix the pieces any way.

The struggle to find our missing pieces may be so difficult and perhaps challenging that we force ourselves to agree that the missing pieces are unnecessary and inaccessible. You will have to pick a search light and go find it until you get. Else, you will live with a "but" for as long as you are unable to find it.

The vivid truth is your picture cannot be said to be true if your hand, your legs, or any other part of your body aren't on it. The picture must carry the whole you. For your life to be perfect, then everything that must characterize it must be available. It's like an automobile with all its parts. Any faulty part in the engine is enough not to make the engine work effectively. If you must be the best you, every piece must be fixed to capacity.

Don't overlook any part of you that's not working. Any area of complaint around you means you have to work more. Soonest, you will be glad you did.

What's that missing piece? Friend, you need it.

# THE AUTOMOBILE IDEOLOGY

I often ponder over automobiles running the highways of my city at high speed. Everyone is in haste and patience is lost. When Karl Benz created this famous invention, pageantry welcomed it. Its unique style and capacity rivaled the grand chariots of his time, a welcome development for the world at that time. This development seemed one exclusively for the rich and wealthy class of Europe until Michael Ford succeeded in developing the mass production process introducing his Ford automobile and applying the same principles that Karl failed to notice in the building of his automobile. Ford opened the door for a new generation of automobiles that improved the cause of the transportation as he mass produced his Ford automobile and took the world by storm outplacing Karl who was still struggling with his perfectionist theories.

What is most striking about this invention is the unity with which every part works. Like a human system where each part does not seek its own but the good of the overall, the automobile consist of many parts, all of them working to the

perfect functioning of the whole automobile. Karl Benz and his engineers had observed that if the automobile would function effectively, all parts must work together in unison. Any part that falters affects the overall functioning of the system. For an organization to be effective, every worker must work cohesively putting hands on deck to ensure the achievement of the goal.

The automobile has a heart, the engine. The engine is the center of combustion. It is the powerhouse of the automobile creating the propelling force for the automobile. Every organization has an “engine team.” The running of the whole team depends on these persons. Though singular as the engine may seem, it has various components. Each of the components plays its role to ensure the engine functions. The persons who function as the engine room of an organization may be working as one but they do not all play the same role. Each person has his or her independent role to play.

The automobile requires a chassis. This is the automobile skeleton, which defines its shape and beauty. The chassis are the buildings that house our business premises. We often have gallant enigmatic complexes housing our banks, hotels, industries etc. The building protects customers as well as workers from heat and rain just as the chassis does to the occupant and the engine. So much as the engine is fixed and



chassis built, this does not make the car move. The automobile need a wheel mechanism. The wheel mechanism makes the car move when the engine throttles. An organization may have a great structure and wonderful staff but it needs to provide services that will keep it going and customers coming. The wheels are thus the rendered services.

A vehicle will keep moving directionless without the steering. The steering guides the wheels of the vehicle. There has to be a steering too for the company. The steering are the ideas and goals upon which the organization runs on. The organization should have a vision or goal that it aims to achieve and that guides its operations. Vehicles have the throttle. The throttle propels the engine. The throttle is the motivation that drives the team. Just as the throttle is often marched when the vehicle is accelerating, workers need motivation often.

Motivation keeps the team directed towards the goal or vision.

The brake mechanism helps control the speed of the automobile, and brings it to rest point. The team would need to unwind after work. Create time for tea breaks and refreshment to strengthen the team for better effectiveness. The gear mechanism helps control the torque transferred to the wheels. There has to be a gear mechanism in an organization. The gear mechanism is the training offered from time to time to improve

services and render better services to customers. This has to be continuous bringing staff up to speed with latest developments.

The automobile would be useless without fuel and oil. Fuel and oil are the allowance and salary paid to workers to ensure they put in their energy to see the success of the company.

Finally, the driver drives the automobile. He is the king, the customer. The customer is why the organization runs in the first place. Give reverence to him.

Treat your work organization as you would treat your automobile, with care.

# THE POST MASTER

In the good old days of the post, we had often collected letters at our post office mailbox or our homes. When a postmaster came across our neighborhood on his old rickety bicycle or exalted motorcycle in search of a home address, we often followed behind him. Letters were not for kids of course, but who cared. We would ask the postmaster, if he had any letter for us and he would give a grim smile, his spectacles falling off his eyes as he gazed at us. No, he would say. Can you read a letter? He would ask. Off course, we can, we would respond like wagged dogs hoping he would hand us one. He would turn to us and say, well, this letter is not for you, it is for some other person, when yours comes, I would let you have it. Then he would ride away to another destination.

Later in life, I began to receive mails and send mails too and observed that same saying of the postmaster, “this letter is not for you, it is for some other person, when yours comes I would let you have it.” It is amazing how we want what should be some other persons. Humans trail towards envy building in their mind a desire to have what does not belong to them. Every letter in the hands of the postmaster goes to a particular

person or group of persons to whom it is meant. The letter writer has written the person's name who should receive it. It is great to have a good desire, but when we seek for, and choose to find pleasure in some other persons parcel, it is stealing.

The process of writing a letter could be tedious and hardwork especially when it is for an official purpose, where you have to polish the grammar and ensure it is readable and understood by the reader at the other end. You have to take your time to choose the right words, removing ambiguity and keeping the language simple. Like the letter writing process, life could be especially challenging and you really have to work hard to make ends meet. The goal is to get to the top of life's ladder. As much as you are selecting your steps, you do have to take some care making sure they are the right steps.

The conclusion of the letter writing process does not mean its uhuru. You have to place the letter in an envelope. The envelope is the protection our letter piece gets. Security is very vital to our personal success. As you strive towards the top, you do not want robbers ridding you of your hard-earned labor. You want to have the things you have labored. While the police and other security agents are about their duty, the first security is you. The letter writer gets an envelope. You have to give yourself some cover too. Take precautions like not staying outdoors at night, watching for, and reporting unknown

persons lurking around the neighborhood to security agents. If you do have enough money, you can go for insurance cover.

Once the letter finds its place in the envelope, you have to visit the post office and get a stamp. The stamp is the cost for transmitting the letter. Every service has a price; every achievement comes with great price. You should be ready to pay down for any service rendered you. Off course, nothing good comes free.

The post office transmits the letter. It is their responsibility to ensure the letter reaches the receiver. At this point, the sender has done his part of the bargain. He now hopes that the letter gets there. Hope is one trait that real time achievers have. They hope for the best and believe their best is good enough.

Sometimes hope may be dashed. This happens sometimes when a letter fails to get through to the other person due to some missed steps in the post office. It could be lost on transit or delays to get to its destination. This could be depressing especially if the letter is urgent. While we often pray for smooth sailing, what happens when things get wrong? You have to accept the challenge and get going.

Once the letter gets to the mailbox of the receiver, it is not just enough. The receiver has to open it, read, and comprehend. Opportunities are like received letters. They are cloaked in some covering. You have to uncover the cloak. Remember,

diamonds do not shine in their raw form; they have to be cut to shine.

When next you see a postmaster, life means so much more than just the letter.

# THE ROUTE TO BEING FOREVER YOUNG

I listened to a young lady sing “Forever young, I wanna live forever young, do you wanna live forever, forever young” lyrics of popular pop star JayZ and Enrique’s “forever young” music collaboration. She was carried away in the rhythms that she could hardly hear what I was saying. I was touched as well that I felt maybe I could sing along.

It seems a big dream and every person’s best dream to be able to live forever. We wish we can take a step into forever land and still exist on this earth however we feel handicapped by the fact that this can only happen in dreamland.

Like JayZ, we find ourselves in that natural quest to remain young. As kids, we desired to grow very fast and become adults. At adulthood we desire to slow down and return to our youthful days. We tend to act in a manner as to make us return to how we used to be many years before now. A plethora of beauty products and scientific concoctions have been developed to help propel this dream. Surgeries are now

possible to make one look younger but not necessarily younger. It seems a modern trend today for one to go under the knife in some hospital because he or she desires a younger look.

In spite of advances in technology, man has failed to add years to his days on earth. We've not had anyone living beyond one hundred and fifty years as yet as a result of these advances. We seem running in a round route returning to where we had begun. A new genre of diseases is hitting this generation. Cancer and other skin related disease are now the order increasingly shortening human lifespan.

But isn't it possible for one to live forever young? There sure is a way. It's an unpopular but sure way though. The reason is because it will require quite a lot of hard work and the ability for you to give up some of the things you consider too precious.

We can live forever and young, only by the things we have done, our actions and how much lives we have being able to influence. It is certain everyone will die but not every one dies. Some die and never exist again, others will die and continue to live, not just in people remembering them but their effect and impact will still be felt many years after.

I picked my church hymnary to sing like I always do every Sunday in church and it dawned on me that writers of every song in the book, persons like Fanny Crosby, Mary Slessor, John



Graham, etc, were all dead yet I and millions in my church who use the same hymnary were in some way reliving the lives of those persons. The same joy they felt when they sang their hymns was the same joy transferred to us as we sang. And their names often were written at a corner of the page even after over two hundred years of their death. I decided too that some day, I should be in the hands of the world long after I'm dead and gone and still be useful to generations unborn.

Steve Jobs the late founder of Apple Computers had this to say "the true test of a great man is in his death, how many more lives he will be able to touch long after he is gone." Myles Munroe said before his death, "The worst tragedy isn't death but living a life without purpose. I will try as much to give up all that I have so that I will live the world empty." Sadly tragedy struck these two men but they remain a great inspiration to many today and will many years to come.

Abraham Lincoln is long gone but when you think determination and perseverance, you would easily find him there at your gate. This is because he has remained forever ageless by his giant strides achieved by his stern determination to achieve, a footprint that has been left in time's concretes.

What are you waiting for? Living forever young may be impossible but there is some possibility and a whole lot of it. What will we remember about you after now when you live

where you are currently? Just in case you close your eyes and never open it to this side, what do you want to be remembered about? Start doing it now and live forever.

# THERE IS A “FIRST” IN EVERY ONE

Let's take a walk back to those little days as a child in primary or secondary school who was always conscious of the academic position that arrived after every term's hard work. Your parents often anticipated the topmost “first” position for your academic brilliance and expected you to gun for that top position.

Those parents whose children managed to make the top of the class were considered privileged to have wards who were brilliant while those children who made the lower side of the rankings were considered dull headed even by their parents. Parents then and today's parents assume that the child who takes first in class is the best or smartest of his peers.

I recently decided to quit using academic positioning as a method of measuring the capacity of the pupils in my school. A parent had met one of my teachers and pleaded that the child is offered help in order to enable him make the pole position in class. I smiled at the offer and decided that I'd removed the

place for position altogether. Parents had become overly conscious of position than the mental development of their wards that I decided it was time a new system for measuring the development of my pupils was developed. When my teachers asked why I decided against writing academic positions on the report sheets, I replied that “there is a first in every pupil in class, every pupil takes first position.”

In life, we have come to accept the assumption that there are those of us who are meant to take pole position and that if you don't catch the top position; you are not worth the number. We often consider ourselves not good enough for the high rank because some other person has gotten there before us. We think that we have to strive to be the best at what some other person is easing his self at. Its time you realize that the ratings don't suit you.

While it's great to have a high rank that you are striving to reach, if you are not meeting up the demands, it's alright. Just check around, there is something else whose demand you outdo. Einstein discovery of the relativity principle had put pen to paper and sealed the very fact of our competition. Everyone is first and best in some special deal that no one else has capacity to achieve. That's often why the best teams don't have the most brilliant or gifted guys working together. The best teams have the most diverse of talents working together.

Every time I study my pupils, I find diverse incredible gifts and talents. Yes, some of them may be academically on the high side and some others are creatively on the high side. I often marvel at the resources of talents within my academic sphere that I find it difficult measuring the performance of a child just by his book rhetoric.

Are you trying to measure up with your neighbor out there who you think is doing way better by one statistic? There is always the temptation to think that way. Get off that thinking pattern; you are just being blind of the possibilities that abound in you. There are absolutely incredible possibilities beyond what you are finding in some other person that you like. You are an original.

You are first and you are best. You may not be all that everyone is and that is good because you are great at being you. Leave the ratings of everyone trying to force you into a grade hunt to meet up their ideal. Just try to make yourself better at being you. It's only a matter of time before you become the ideal for others to look up too. Truth is, if you are not an original, no one finds it necessary copying. If you are a copy, people will prefer the original.

Are you thinking, you haven't worked hard enough to make the ratings? You will be working too long and too hard to meet some other person's ratings because the qualifications for the

ratings are always reviewed. When you work in your ratings, no one has to change your qualifications because you create and define them.

What's stopping you? Be first!!!

# THINK IT, SAY IT, ACT IT

A student friend of mine at the university complained this New Year that he had been thinking too much about making money and becoming an entrepreneur. He asked me if I had to go through enormous thinking process when I was at the university. I laughed at his notion of thinking too much and I replied, now is best time to do all the thinking. Think through.

As the New Year gets running, so much expectation was in the air the first day. You heard so much of making New Year goals and perhaps you have made the goals. But it seems now after a few days into the year, that you seem to be starting the year the same way you ended it. Maybe you resolved to stop some habit or not to be in debt but you observed that as the year ticks on, you are finding yourself in the same dog vomit. Well, you aren't the only person in that shoe.

There are quite a number of persons like you whose New Year resolutions have failed to pass the first test, the first week after the first day of the year. They returned back to the old lifestyle that they showed disgust for the New Year eve. Some wished it was automatic that change happen as the new year arrives but they have accepted the fact of change been a condition of the

mind and not the year. It's actually ones resolve to get past a challenge that gets him kicking through that challenge.

The reason most persons have failed to keep their resolutions so early in the year isn't because they lacked the resolve needed to get it done. It's actually because they kept their resolutions at the initial level, the shallow thinking level.

Any change of state begins from a thinking process. The thinking helps create the picture you would love to see tomorrow happen. This thinking could be shallow, deep, or critical. It's shallow when a thought just passes and one admits to its possibilities but doubts if it can be done. The deep thinking exists when one develops a thought, sees the possibility and believes it can come through but doesn't act. Such a person who has done deep thinking will brag at how innovative his ideas may be but he doesn't go beyond that. The critical thinking goes the entire mile. It sees, believes and develops the propulsion to have that believe become reality.

Have you really taken time out to think over and over about the future endpoint you are desirous to see happen in 2015? It's not just about making wishes of a better year. Wishes are great but it doesn't change anything. What changes everything is you thinking through.

Thinking through means you have done critical thinking. You have gone through all the strengths and weaknesses,



limitations and aspirations and you have developed the certainty and conviction of the huge possibility of your resolution becoming possible. It means you have being convinced that action would bear the fruits that you desire to see.

When you have thought through, just say it. Tell the world, write it down as your goal lists, believe it, tell your friends, tell those who care to ear. Your words are the most powerful propellants for that change you want. When you tell your friends you are stopping smoking for example, you automatically make them your checks. They often will remind you when you try to smoke. If you tell your child, this year you have resolved not to fight your wife or husband, your child will automatically remind you that you have failed on your promise.

When you have said it, just act towards it. You will discover an uncommon rush of energy towards your actualization of what you have thought and said. The possibilities are unimaginable and they become miracles in our everyday life.

Now, you can see the reason you have failed just so early in the year. You kept your New Year resolutions to yourself. You told no one. You need someone to see that dream to help propel you toward its actualization. You need someone to tell you it is possible. You need someone to mock at your capacity to keep that resolve. You need someone to tell you, you can't. You need

someone to mock at how huge your goals are. These words will propel your action.

In this New Year, there are uncommon possibilities awaiting you. Just take that step and now, for change.

# THOSE MOMENTS WHEN YOU CAN'T FIND NOBODY

What do you do when you need someone so badly to support that idea you've been cooking up and you think it's really going to succeed and you don't find that someone. You may feel down-casted, pained and perhaps doubt if you really are in the world for good. These situations are part of our everyday existence and a fact we often have to face whether we like it not. However successful a man may be, he still has such issues to face.

A sales manager at a top commercial bank had this to face trying to defend his well thought through sales strategy. He had acquired all the advice from top sales analysts around his professional industry and had deep assurance that all the advice were worth it. But he had to face the top directors and managers at his office over defending the possibility of his sales proposals working. From one idea to another, his ideas got

bashed and washed as each manager took turns to rubbish his work. This manager was dazed that his best work was being given a zero. He returned home feeling depressed and in need of just that one top manager that will stand and see from his stand point.

Whether you are down the ladder or up there at the prime, there is still that fear of being alone with your big set of ideas. Depression may steal in and you increasingly find yourself plunging downward away from your expected endpoint. The question at the beginning of this writ becomes necessary when we consider that many ideas are finding their way into dustbins because the inventors of those ideas could not find that person who they expect to believe in them.

Your idea is scarce and nobody will offer it the way you do even if those you believe to accept it don't. They only do not accept it because, they aren't in your shoe picturing from the same direction as you are. Yes, you need somebody, but not having that body to support your idea doesn't mean it's finished for you. You can afford to look up to "**Someone.**"

Every idea developed from its inventor or initiator takes a "long walk to freedom." That freedom arrives only after some bashing and whitewashing by everyone. Everyone often does not see great ideas because they are easily deceived by the normal life they are used to. Everyone loves the sky remaining

blue; they can't picture a green or yellow sky. Everyone sees only everyday possibilities, they can't see beyond today. You can understand with such persons how short sighted they are.

In the face of a crowded disbelief system, is that someone who manages to call you aside and ask for a one to one discuss on the possibilities of your idea making grand entry into realism. That someone is ready to help you iron out those issues that seems to limit your idea and then help you make it a reality. That someone is always around watching out for you.

We are often plunged into depression by the uncelebrated acts of everyone who might have pushed at their thought of how irrelevant our special idea may be. We often are the ones who allow them this opportunity to demean our so much work often because we think we have them as our celebrators. They necessarily will not celebrate your work until you have gotten your way up. The crowd won't support you up. What the crowd does is boo your desire to climb and cheer only after you have strived your way up.

Finding that someone to give your idea a lift may not be as easy at the first trial. However your resoluteness at pushing your idea through however the encumbrances will attract that someone you will need. People are the hand tools of God for the manifestation of ideas and visions. Somehow someone will have to believe your idea makes sense once you can get going

pushing behind you the fact that what you are offering hasn't gotten the cheering as you had thought.

Coca-Cola won't be Coca-Cola today if the man who had developed its recipe had quietly thrown it away after everyone he had tried to sell it to had disdained it as useless. Today, it is a brand name because the developer found that one person who bought into it against the crowd who had opposed its market value.

You might not find everybody walking in your direction because you may not be worth looking at now. Well, that's for now. Just wait at that idea; someone will come knocking very soon.

# TICK SAYS THE CLOCK

Technology has shown us its benevolence in making products once considered scarce commodity and for the highly placed, accessible to the average person. Sometimes we still wish we could place ourselves in the past and joke at what a comic we would make of what had being a norm. I looked back to my childhood and when I see such dejavu before my eyes, the kind that we were part of, just over a decade back, I marvel at how much has changed.

You may hark back to that period when only few persons in the community had the ancient grandfather clock. Everyone would flock to the houses of these persons to have a glimpse of what the time was. Knowing what the clock indicated was a novelty. As a child, people considered you “sharp” if you could tell the time. A proud mum would call out her son, “junior go check the time at Papa Joe’s place.” Junior would spring, a proud son of his mom over to Papa Joe’s house a kilometer away. This was his only chance to escape from his mother’s grip. He would whistle walking majestically towards the house. Junior how are you, papa Joe would ask as he saw this small sweating man rush into his sitting room. “My mom sent me to check the time,” He

would say. Junior would calculate the hands of the clock, “long hand in 5 and the short hand in 8.” He took that with him to his mother, reciting continuously “long hand in 5 and the short hand in 8” just so that he would not forget. He then hopes that his friend does not come along his path so that it does not slip his memory. If he forgets, he would have to return to Papa Joe’s house or else face the thrashing cane of his mom.

This may be your experience. Though we did not have the clock, at our disposal, the fast changing time oriented world was taking a strong grip on us that we had to be cautious of time and find a way to know what it indicated.

There is certainly not enough time to get everything going. We have to make do with our “little” time and pray we can fix all our engagement into them. From when a child comes into life, his parents begin to measure his time. A mother anticipates that in two months, the weaning process is over and she would return to her business pushing the child to a day care system. Time runs fast and soon the child grows, heads into school and his parents think that by year eight he should be through primary school and by fourteen out of secondary school. By twenty, he should be a medical doctor. What a rush? When you ask why, they would say there is no time.

Wait! To where are we heading? We may seem in a digital world where our digital clocks no longer tick. We no longer



hear the lull in between two ticks so we think we just have to keep running through. While the clock is there to guide our activities, it should not be our master. Like the pausing ticks on the old grandfather clock, there should be time to relax and make productive thoughts.

There is time for everything under the sun. There is time to learn. We cannot be successful without having to learn. Some persons want to achieve without having to go through all the painful process of learning. They want to rush through. Many persons especially parents refuse this ideology. They want their wards to break the rules, jump classes, and get to places they are not qualified. The endpoint, which is often not favorable, leaves them in a state of discontent.

The “no time” syndrome has led to development of the “succeed at all cost” approach in which people do all to ensure often against the ethics of the game to get what they want. While we must succeed, patience should be a rule. Wait for your turn, do not break the line because you think you feel you have no time, and should be given benefit over others to enable you rush over to another task. If everyone were to consider time, no one would get anything going. Everyone would act at random and society would be in a confused state every one seeking for his own and often getting nothing.

Pass through time; let everything happen in its time as you work towards your goals. Do not let time pass through you; else, you will be pushed to make decisions that will be detrimental to you and the people around you.

# TODAY IS A GOOD DAY TO START ALL OVER

Life presents us with challenges that press us so badly that sometimes we find ourselves at the losing end even when we have given our best shot. It could be in a case of an examination, business, family or relationships where we have tried so hard to get at our desired achievement level but all our striving ends up in a colossal waste of our energy. We may choose to renege on previous decisions we have made choosing to let go and deciding to quit altogether. If you are in this situation, then you should be reading this.

Achieving great feats do not come so easy. We often have to put in so much hardwork, tire ourselves out and pray for good fate. Great achievers never woke up on their bed of achievement. They strived so hard. They never got it right at first time. They strolled through series of failures and then they broke into limelight having to go through their failures and deciding to quit the things that had made them fail. It was never easy for them.

Real achievers have to go through depressing moments. Situations may not go their way at the present initial moment but they do not let this encumber their desirable future status. If they failed, they pick their failures from there and decide how to run round the cause of their failure. They turned to their drawing board and inflicted some changes, then returned to the laboratory to put to practice again

The massive gains of technology which we now enjoy have been the massive failures of some persons. These persons had a conception of the ideas they so wanted to see limelight. They did often have to do some manipulations. Each time they tried, they got it wrong but the beast in them said “hey man this is possible”. They resolved to ensure that the failure they had had was not going to disrupt their future prospect. They strived, failing and choosing to start all over again after they had failed. Thomas Edison, Michael ford, karl benz, Newton, Faraday, bell, etc. are testaments to this.

The current failure situation we find ourselves may be depressing but there is a message behind it. If you have failed you can whisk yourself from the slumber of your failure into renown by choosing to begin all over again.

Take the 7up story for inspiration. The myth around this drink is one of having failed six times and getting it right the seventh time. At every time the scientists mixed the contents, they just

did not get the results they wanted. They would have thought, what the hell is this? We have tried now for five times. Someone might have stood around to whisper, call it quit. Let us forget about it. Find something else to push your energy into. But they persevered. At the sixth time they failed, the voice would have said, I just told you to quit, what have you profited by not listening? Yet they still persevered. Let's take this shot guys one more time, one of them might have whispered. Just then, it was eureka. They got it right. The 7up drink was the product of a six step failing process. When they got it wrong, they started all over again

Imagine what would have happened if the guys at 7up did not persevere. Today the world wide global brand would not have existed. The truth is truly great achievements require a certain degree of perseverance. The story can never be complete if you do not persevere. Are you discouraged because you have tried and failed? Friend you have to wake up from your sleep and get going. You have to tell yourself the truth. I might have gotten it wrong but I can become a success. That examination isn't too difficult for this head, that task is within my capacity, that failed relationship can be built, the business deal might have broken down but it can be built again.

Do not let the present encumbrances stop you on your path to future glory. Remember if you have failed, today and now is the best time to start all over again even with more zest.

# STAND UNDER TO UNDERSTAND

There is a huge pulse around the world at this time. It is called the rat race. I have always observed the rats and if you have like I have, you would have observed that the rats are always on a hurry getting somewhere or nowhere. The world is constantly running and it has influenced how its occupants lead their lives. We want to get to the top now and immediately however far the top is from where we are. We thus look for short cuts and fast means to hurry up there and then we land back down crashing to the ground because we haven't learned enough that we should to qualify for the position.

Many of those who have fallen from success were actually persons who were suddenly on a hurry. They refused to learn the principles every step of the way because they assumed they already knew enough too early and thus qualify themselves for the bigger position that they are eyeing.

Life has a processor called time. Time has the capacity to process everyone who passes through its process and makes

them thick. This time often presents us with teachers, mentors and situations under which we will be taught the art of standing.

Standing is no easy task. When a child is born into the world, the child comes in without being able to walk. He lives the first few months learning to crawl and then he learns to stand, takes the first step and then a few steps, and then makes a longer step. The very fact that a child has begun walking doesn't mean he would begin to walk long distance, run or even jump immediately. He still has to be guided until he attains maturity when he can take a long stroll into life.

The processing that time gives us isn't always interesting. It brings us under, presses us down and then we strive to get up from being under consciously by looking at how persons who are standing have learnt to stand. Those persons are our teachers and mentors. They know what standing means and have understood the principles of standing.

Being teachable is a great quality of great people. It requires being subject under the guidance of someone who knows better and understands or is understanding already. We can activate the quality we desire in others in ourselves when we find ourselves under the guidance of that person. Engineers have to learn from engineers, doctors from doctors, lawyers from lawyers, preachers from preachers.



The route to reaching great heights is feasted with many teachers each of which bear certain attributes that you have to learn. Those teachers hang around not necessarily as humans but as situations to build our longsuffering, patience, tenacity, courage, perseverance, diligence, determination and accountability. All these are virtues that we develop en-route to the destination where we think is the bus-stop of our arrival.

Those who haven't built these virtues but go through short cuts end up under developed and soon give up easily when the test of the office or position they have hurriedly gotten arrives. Yes, every position in our lives carries a problem portion that must be challenged by virtues developed from experiences of previous situations.

To be candid, there is never enough opportunity to learn everything you need to know up there because it is expected that you should have known them at a lesser position and apply them to the new challenges that arrives. Sadly though, many persons end up having to return to where they had begun because they found a way around thinking they were going somewhere till the wind blew them off for their incompetence.

The revelation of getting up is learning to stand under someone or a up situation, watching, taking notes about how the situations have being managed and is being managed by those

up so that soon when you find yourself up which certainly will arrive, you will be considered fit to stay up.

Students in a class room will have to sit under the tutelage of a standing teacher in order for them to understand. They can't be outside the class while the teacher is in and then expect to understand what the teacher is saying in the class. It's the same principle anywhere and everywhere.

Understand that if you must understand and stand, you have to first learn to stand under.

# UNDERRATED?

Have you felt less valuable because some people have the notion that you can't get around a task even when you know within yourself that you can? It could be hurting finding yourself in this situation. If you've found yourself in this kind of situation, just know you are not a measure of what those persons think or say. You are best the way you rate yourself.

Having a huge sense of self-value is the inertia for the accomplishment of any great task. The believe has to begin with you. The good news is some of the greatest achievers were not highly rated. Most of them were considered worthless. For some who managed to make it through school, the class counted their position from behind. In spite of this, they never accepted the ratings of the people around them. They knew within themselves that they were far more valuable.

The high incidence of suicide is a measure of the number of persons who have accepted the ratings of others ahead of theirs. These persons were blind to their strength. They cheapened to the babblings of others and decided they were not worth living. The world has lost some of the greatest inventors, scientist, designers etc. who would have imparted

into our world if only they had refused the ratings others stamped on them.

A study of the top fifty richest men on earth revealed this shocking truth. Seventy percent of them were considered failures, dropouts. The truth is, they were wrongly rated. These persons rejected the ratings the academic system had rated them. They might have dropped out of school but their believe never dropped. Their self highly rated brains got to work and today they are highly celebrated.

No one has the right to rate you. Our academic system does not have the capacity to rate your ability. Inside you is much more than man's capacity can measure. If you are last on the list, that's only the worst thing that can happen. Your mental capacity can do much more.

Brian Tracy, best-selling author and multimillionaire reckons that the measure of our ability is beyond any known system can measure. He wasn't even an average student but he had a huge self believe and that has being the drive of his success.

You can do more than people think. What people are saying about you isn't the last. The final say is you. If you tell yourself you can, then you truly can. God has imputed in us the ability to achieve beyond human measure. All you have to do is accept God's verdict.

What's God's verdict? You can do all things through God's strength. Accept the verdict, believe the verdict, and confess the verdict. Every time you feel cast down by people's opinion about your capacity, remember you can do all things. Just confess it and you will find yourself in a completely new world of possibilities.

What you can do will surprise you. Often, we accept the limitations of our environment and the people that consist of it. We stay where we are when we should be far ahead. We underrate ourselves. People see us higher than we see ourselves. When we are told how valuable we are, we tend to doubt the truth of this declaration. Thank God someone believes you can do much more. Whatever has made you think less of yourself must get an uppercut. Refuse any debasing declarations.

Rank yourself high up there. You may not seem up there at this moment, but that's just for now. When you keep believing and confessing your desirable high status, you will get there in a matter of time.

C'mon, friend you can't stay here too long. You are worth more. You are highly rated

# WAITING FOR BETTER

In every man is the innate attribute for desiring better things from life. If you live in a one-bedroom apartment you desire a two bedroom, if you walk on foot you desire a car etc. We want the better life, and would do much within our capacity to get this life.

If you are like me who grew up in a downtown part of Lagos and had to get through with the rigors that characterized the harsh life of downtown Lagos, this story may be familiar. We walked bare foot anywhere we went with patched shorts. It was commonplace for boys then. Often, it was not a great sight and we felt shame we could not stand with our peers from well-to-do homes in the satellite town just a stone throw away. Dads would make promises and our spirits were often high up there anticipating that soonest our story would change.

When we discussed on the football field, we talked about promises our parents had made. We often began with the phrase “when my papa buy...” or “when my mama buy” in our local pidgin. We would bounce and mimic walk patterns believing that a new shoe and cloths were symbols of better

status. But it often never came as soon as we would have wanted it. We had to wait so long.

If one of us was luckier and got his earlier than the rest, he was talk of the town amongst the children. In his new shoes and wears, he was higher animal and he would give the pose we had always practiced together. The rest of us would be infuriated and muse amongst ourselves the phrase “don’t mind him, now he is doing *shakara*.” Our believe increased that if one of us could get a new shoe and clothes from his parents, then we too would get ours soon. But we still had to wait.

Waiting for better could be a gruesome experience. You may query yourself over why the future event you are anticipating is not happening now. You have the posh car, the posh duplex, your beautiful kids, and your office beside the sea in your mental picture. Sometimes you might have undergone spiritual exercises like fasting and going for prayers to speed you up to the better life. Yet, in spite of all your struggles, the better life still stands on the waiting list.

It’s like a beautiful woman who expects her suitors to fit her requirements. Such women have to wait so long for the perfect man even when other suitors are trying to woo her. As she ages and discovers time isn’t beside her, she becomes frustrated and bitter and would accept any man that comes.

While we anticipate better things, we must learn to make do with what we have. Contentment is great gain. Nothing is wrong desiring better for its only when we desire that we get. However, having a desire does not mean we have to lose our heads over it. Though we have to push until something happens, we have to do it in the light of right.

Some persons could go any length to ensure they get a better quality life. Local movies could be horrifying watching scenes of betrayal and killings where a man could sacrifice his family for trivial short-term wealth because he desires the better life.

For the patiently striving and waiting, hope never fails. You may seem to wait so long but the measure of the length of your waiting compared to the benefits accrued after time has passed and the better life arrives is distances apart.

The school of thought that supports “the end justifying the means” has brainwashed our mentality into thinking we have to get all we want by all means. Well, you can afford to change your mentality by sticking to right means. What is gotten right always reproduces right. When you get the better life the right way, you can inspire others to follow your steps and you leave right thinking people footprints to follow.

The better life is no novelty. It’s what everyone should desire and have. You deserve a shift from mediocrity valley to



champions mountain. You deserve something better than what you have but you have to prove you deserve it anyway.

Back to the childhood story. We often managed to get our new wears a few days to Christmas. Christmas was when we often got new wears and that would last us the year. It was always great sight when on 25<sup>th</sup> December, we would throng the streets all of us clad in our new sparkling and often unwashed wears proud that we could have a new look that increased our esteem. Though soon the cloths would wear because of continuous use and we would anticipate another new wear come December the next year, we still carried our head high that at least we could look something close to our peers the other part of town.

Attaining the better life provides us so much joy and happiness. It's a life we don't want to cut short. We want to live it for the rest of our life. It's worth waiting for.

Don't feel derisive about your future better life. It's coming.

# WHAT'S NEXT AFTER YOU MADE IT?

I looked up over the congregation in church on New Year eve and I'd never seen my church as filled through the last year as we had on New Year eve. Every Jackie member had failed not to miss the night's program. They had ran into church to thank God and find some new words of prophesy upon which they could bank their future expectations on. At every prophetic phrase the pastor mentioned, I could hear a vehement amen. Happy New Year, happy New Year erupted from lips with a barrage of fireworks and smiles erupting from faces after the ministers exhortation that I had never seen smile before. Indeed, the battle into the New Year had begun.

As I stepped out of church, I felt uncommonly easy. Though I had suffered some bouts of cough and maybe lost my voice but the tranquil that arrived that morning surpassed any peace I had tried to find in the last year. I knew certainly that this New Year would be some great year to look up to.

You are reading this piece because you cruised along with me into this New Year. By now you've had your plates of rice, bottles of choice drinks and perhaps visited places of interest. You are beginning to settle into the New Year. You might have heard or read the New Year speeches of our nation's political big wigs. They seem to be preaching peace in this pre-prophesied turbulent election year. Our religious leaders have had one or two words to say and we've carried the believe of a better year into 2015.

Well, it's interesting to note that as much as those we ascribe prophetic status have spoken, we are our biggest prophets. The fact that we are jumping into a New Year doesn't necessarily mean everything's changed over the New Year eve. The prophets might have made prophetic declarations about the New Year and its promises but the benchmark for our achievement is solidly based on how much we have prepared for the year.

The year has so much to offer. It's filled with so much emptiness that has to be filled by our own prophetic declarations. These prophetic declarations are your goals, visions, dreams and aspirations. They are your prayers. The prophets might have led the way in showing you what God's mind is. But God also wants you to do some home work. He wants you to tell him you can also think of big things that may

seem impossible now but which you want to arrive at as we get into this year.

What are your 2015 goals like? I hope I'm not poking into your own personal business. But you see, the best time to set those goals is now, this very early. If you've not been given to setting yearly goals, I suggest you give a try. Personally, I wasn't a goal setting person until I decided there is no harm in trying last year. I wrote down a set of achievements that at the end of the year I should have achieved. I started from small ones to very great ones.

I longed to run a leadership centre, to be a renowned national writer, to become a renowned change causer, to publish a number of my finished books, to meet Nigeria's foremost writers, to start my college monthly newspaper, to start a radio show and then a TV show. These were amongst my biggest goals. I was just a wannabe at the beginning and had no idea how my 2014 goals would end up at the end of the year plus the fact that I was financially handicapped. However because I had a goal, it was as anyone can consider done. I might not have achieved all the big goals but I got somewhere.

I started a leadership centre, my writing is increasingly gaining attention, I met and spoke with a couple of Nigeria's foremost writers and editors, and my college monthly newspaper is hitting schools come January while I am also walking towards

the accomplishment of more goals with my vision partners. It's incredible what can happen when you write your goals down and work towards it.

You may elope at the joy of an awesome better prospect in 2015 and thank God that difficult 2014 is fast gone. I celebrate with you and I encourage you to review the past year and see where and how mistakes were made. Seek for ways to make change happen right away as this New Year begins. Then will the better prospects become astounding realities.

Welcome to a year of uncommon possibilities. 2015 is a chance to evolve. Take it .

# WHAT'S THE VALUE OF YOUR IDEA?

I came across this story while perusing through a book some years ago. A chief executive had a staff who earned millions of dollars of monthly wage. This staff came to work when he loved; he was a bit flamboyant in his lifestyle causing a stir amongst other staffs who raised highbrows when they observed his high wage and less or no work as compared to their rigorous work on and off the office. The other staff came together to plot his removal. The chief executive received the report, smiled and told his staff, "You are here because of that man's ideas. His ideas are worth billions to this company."

The secret of some of the biggest companies are the ideas of one or few persons. Big chip companies understand the value of human capital. They understand how much value each staff is especially those with the ability to tinker. These companies welcome credible tinkering that can bring about positive development and growth. The staff that discovers his tinkering ability is on the up side of the company.

Ideas build society. People create and make because of ideas. Great inventions started out as some pulse of inspiration that popped in sudden rush. Eureka!! like Newton's shout in his discovery of the idea behind gravity, we muse or shout in joy when we suddenly discover this solution that we have so long hoped to get to solve a need. The sudden joy that elopes could cast us into an ecstatic air and if it is a blue chip idea, the money that could be coming through could be mind-blowing.

The quality of an idea is its ability to supply solution to a need in the most efficient way. You may have an idea but it is invaluable if it does not meet the need you want it to meet.

When man desired to fly, ideas poked from all corners.

Designers and inventors created all sort of flying balloons and flying gliders. They were huge ideas but they were encumbered by the giant limitations they could not fight against; air direction, density and speed. The world waited for that idea, the big one that would solve all these need. There it came, the Wilbur brothers had the startling idea.

Ideas have time value. An idea is top notch if it comes just in time when it is needed most. What this means is that an idea could be considered archaic and not useful for present system of things. The time efficacy of an idea is what gives a company advantage over other companies providing the same service.

When apple considered releasing its iPhone, bookmakers thought a phone without pads was inconceivable. But the idea alone was enough to make phone savvy consumers bask in anticipation. The cost of the iPhone was skyrocketing and the only answer to apple's monopoly was a response by Samsung whose design and operating system Google's android was good response and a cheaper option. The guys at Tecno knew if they had to be relevant and create a name for their efforts, they have to provide a popular option and they hit the right idea providing android phones with high value capacity at cheaper cost. The strength of an idea is the result it gets at the end of its application. Once the inspiration for an idea arrives, it requires the right application to see it produce the intended result.

Our state of development is the quality of ideas transformed into reality. The more creative our ideas, the more creative our inventions and the result is increased performance and higher development status. If our leaders are creative about their ideas and creative tinkers advise them, they would churn out exceptional leadership.

Everyone has the exceptional gift of creating ideas. It's in everyone but the debar is our ability to value our idea in respect to the ideas of others. The weakness is that you allow higher credence to others who seize on it and improve on their



idea making capability. You have to trigger your ability to create ideas and develop them.

Your ideas may not be relevant but it has value. It creates options. You may fail to get that top-notch idea today but if you try, some day you will.

Don't sit back and watch when your idea could be the rallying point. Let your idea poke out and see it propel the kind of transformation you will love to see. Your ideas got value.

# WHAT'S YOUR TRADE MARK™?

Have you observed the ™ or the ® logos on brand packs? You will always find statements such as “this logo and name is registered trademark of so and so company” on brand packs. Why do brands place these statements clearly on their packs? They fear that some other company may produce similar products. In order to differentiate theirs and the rest, there has to be a distinctive name and brand. The name of product and logo is a representation of the brand and it has to be protected.

Like company brands, you have a trademark. There is something that's distinctively yours that nobody can lay claim to however hard they try. This is your own instinctive gift and talent. It is your characteristic trait, which stands you out. A sad fact is that most persons are unaware of this innate attribute. They sell themselves out and miss on their uniqueness.

Our tendency towards being copy cats isn't new. Our world is filled with too many look alike and no one wants to be prototype. We want to watch others create, and be the ones to

repeat their creation and marvel on how a wonder their creation is. If you are in this shoe, it's time to recreate your creative ingenuity. You have to be the original, distinct from the rest.

Our banking system expects we keep individual signatures. Your signature is what gives you open door to what's in your account. No other person can get into your account without your signature permission. Our trademark is what we are identified with. It's like our signature, unique with the opportunities that come with it.

A company's trademark is what gives it a selling right to its product. Companies recognize that they can't sue for infringements if their trade titles are not protected. We are individuals each with vested products to sell to the world. What do we sell?

We sell character attributes; good attributes such as honesty, patience, cheerfulness, love, hope, joy etc. and bad attributes such as anger, distrust, impatience, dishonesty etc. The quality of the brand "you" is the quality of good attributes you are able to sell as well as the reduced amount of bad attribute. You'd hear statements like, "that girl is very loving, or that guy is very patient." Those with bad attributes often have their bad attributes tagged around them like "that guy is ill-tempered." A

responsibility on you is to protect your image by shelving off those bad attributes and propelling the good ones.

We sell knowledge; whatever knowledge at our disposal is sellable. The quality of knowledge at our disposal could be our selling point and trademark. A teacher offers knowledge because he has a depository of it. A person is an engineer because he has knowledge in the engineering field. A doctor is tagged “doctor” because he has developed substantial knowledge from the school of medicine. Whatever field of endeavor that one chooses to stand out in requires grasping the requisite knowledge necessary.

We sell creativity. Your ability to create is a distinctive attribute that stands you out. Inside everyone is that creative instinct, original and distinct. God created each one of us distinctly and he made our genetic makeup so different such that no two persons can act or think the same way. We see differently and different things even from the same point of view. There is an original creativity that your different sight of view provides, which the world wants to see. The world does not want repetitions. It wants originals.

You are an asset and a huge one. Your value surpasses any known human measuring system. Inside everyone is the strength value. It is you who has to appreciate your value and

seek how best to improve and protect it. You have to instigate that original you. Nobody will if you don't.

Find that something original you can do that other persons cannot try doing and do it. That is your trademark.

# WHEN THINGS FALL APART

Chinua Achebe's bestselling "things fall apart" novel propagates the phrase "things fall apart, the center can no longer hold." We've been made to believe that when things fall apart, it is because the center is not holding. For this reason, we find some persons to blame for every negative event in our lives especially people we think should be responsible.

We've learnt to throw tantrums at government for every wrong event in the country even if these events are the effects of the inadequacies of a few persons. We hear phrases like "the guys at the corridor of power have jeopardized the system." This "find someone to blame syndrome" has so eaten deep into our mentality as a people that we are now contented with "things are bad because the people at the center are bad."

Against this school of thought, if things don't fall apart, the center will not hold. The quality of the "center" is the degree at which "falling" has taken place. You may be asking how I mean. Every great event comes because of some falling apart. Falling

apart in this case means a discontentment with a status. This status could be a failed marriage, lost friendship, death of a loved one, unemployment and whatever events that makes a remarkable negative impact in your life.

The center refers to the strive to get over your challenges. It is the giant effect you are making to ensure the falling is not catastrophic. The center also refers to the quality of life that you intend to have, I mean the better life.

Scientific Geniuses understand the principle of falling apart. Old technology and scientific ideas must fall apart or give way for the development and application of modern new technology, which is the center.

Difficult times must need be, they are the falling apart. Times are not difficult because the center, which we expected should hold, does not hold. Rather, the difficult scenarios in our lives abound because the perfect center i.e. solution has to resolve them.

You may be in a financial crisis and your mind's crossed with the cause of your financial affliction. Your guess may be that some event had brought you down to the state you may find yourself. Well, it is good thought if you can find the cause of your financial struggle. Searching for an event long gone may be like casting shadows. It's a wrong premise to think upon a

misfortune and ponder on the cause when a strong solution i.e. new center is hanging around the corner.

If it's a job you are hunting for and you have strived hard without avail. You have queried your mind on why the economy is bad and why the government has found no answer to the huge unemployment imbalance. The great deal is that you have been seeing your lack of job as being a result of the failed center. Now think this way. What's the reason for the creation of jobs? To fit people in right? The government won't be creating jobs for ghost. They have to create jobs for people who need them. People are thinking of creating jobs and opportunities because there is a need necessitated by unemployment. Job creating entrepreneurs are the centers who are trying to hold the falling apart caused by unemployment.

In the case of a loss of a family or friend, we often resort to tireless weeping especially if those persons have being influential in our lives. We could be so turned apart because of these events that we cannot but resort to asking questions why such lovely nice persons should go at this time. Those persons might have held the position as centers in your life helping you pull the strings that had ensured you never fell too far even when you did fall. When such events happen, it is because a



new stronger center must find his way to prominence in your life.

Cast your mind to the riverside or port where ships docks. Ships have an anchor and hook upon which regardless of the strength of the wave, the ship anchors. If you face challenging times, the good news is, there is a strong anchor around the corner. God stands as the uncommon center. He is pulling your strings and saying son, daughter you are not going to fall anyway. Just trust my ability to pull the strings.

Just know this that if things do not fall apart, there will not be a need pulling them together, no need for a center. The center holds because things have fallen apart.

# WHEN TOUGH TIMES LAST, TOUGH PEOPLE DON'T

We are very much familiar with Robert .H. Schuler's "tough time never last but tough people do" dictum. My student walked into class looking dumb founded. He seemed lost in his words and suddenly burst into "tough time never last but tough people". I looked up at him and asked, why do you say that? He said, that's what people always say.

The student seemed right to have alluded his predicament in preparing for his university matriculation exams as tough times and yearned to be free. In his opinion, he was the tough guy but I did not see anything tough about him.

Robert Schuler's statement follows the crowd school of thought which appeals to sympathetic minds. You hear some folk say, "c'mon bro, we are just going through tough times, we've got

to be tough and come around this” and he patts the friend on his back.

I have observed against this school of thought that when tough times last, tough people don't. You may raise eyebrow. You'd be thinking, what's this guy talking about? Is he trying to redefine a standing belief? Sure, and certainly.

You do not have to be tough to get through tough times and tough times last your lifetime. Coming into the world was tough time. You squeezed through the heat of your mom's womb and prayed every day for God to bring you forth into the world and you did not have to be tough to be born into the world. Having you cry your first time was tough times, yet you were not tough. You faced tough times having to drink only milk and wished you could eat what your mum and siblings were eating and finally you were given your first “rice” and you did not need to be tough.

When you faced tough time learning to walk and wishing you could be like every other person, tell me you were tough. At last, you began school and had difficulty learning and mom said these are tough times, junior you have to be tough. You escaped tough times in primary school and through secondary school tough time never seized, rather it increased.

Getting your senior school certificate was tough times and you were not tough. You pushed through to the university and hell

let loose. You consoled yourself in Robert's book. Offcourse, many a student only learn the mystery in books after getting into the university and discovering they would need some motivation. Yet you were not tough. Do you remember there were times you got through some courses at the university and you wondered how you did it?

Getting out of university was tough time, and you searched for job, tough time. When you got the job, you had to please the boss, tough time. You considered marriage, another tough time. Children came, tough time. If children don't come early, tough time. Large salary and the huge extended family, tough time, if you have no money, tough time still knocks. Your child's health fails and your parents are fast catching the ageing sickness, and there again tough times. When you seem at ease, your thoughts aren't. Yet you say tough times never last

Wait! Can you really boast of being tough? You can't be as tough as Hitler, Napoleon, Saddam, or even Gaddafi. These were allglobally acclaimed tough people. Yet when they had tough times where you would expect they live up to their billing, they cowered.

One attribute of tough people is that they create problems for themselves. They cause trouble and act out as "commando" trying to resolve them. They make people see them as gods and often their "hand caused" troubles bring them down.

Those who claim being tough often cannot face tough times. They are the easiest to lick. All the renowned tough people the world over often come down like a pack of cards. Ah! You should not forget Abacha and the apple story.

All through our years on earth are tough times. What changes is the degree of toughness that increases as our minds develop.

Tough times don't end because a tough you overcomes them. No. if it were so, you would have wearied out by now having to face all the tough times. Rather, we are blessed with Grace and function in Hope.

Grace don't come to tough people and often tough people don't hope. They think they have all they need to get through life. Grace goes to weak everyday vessels, leading them towards their hopes for as long as they consider themselves not tough.

# YOU ARE US

Everyone grows up with that bit of “self ahead of others.” Those little days as a child, you might recall that cabin biscuit pack which an older relative bought for you and your sibling came asking for a bite. You recall how you vehemently refused your sibling the biscuit until only after he had worn himself out begging before you broke a biscuit into two and gave the smaller one to him. This seems to be an inherent nature in every child growing up until those attributes are fashioned. When the child becomes refined, he begins to think of others as well.

As children grow, they live in the grooming of their family air. A mother would say, “Son, you know the son of whom you are.” The expectation from family, acquaintances, and friends is for them to live up to the aura of their family. They grow with this mindset and become character representations of their family.

It is baffling to observe though that in spite of the rigorous process of character molding that mothers have to put their wards through, we have grown into adulthood with that “I first” attribute. These attributes we find in almost everything we do. We want to get pay first for a task we have done with others,

we want to drive our way out of the traffic jam in spite of other vehicles ahead of us, we want to break the queue in the bank, etc. The order of the day is “get your share of the pie as much as you can and as early as you can”.

You may be content with satisfying yourself but mom did not teach you to satisfy yourself alone. She taught you to take that action in relation to the people around putting yourself in the position of others. It's just that you never cared to listen.

Any thing you do affects more than just you. If you over-speed in anticipation of getting to your destination on time, you will get an accident and others will be injured or die too and the impending trauma for your family could be catastrophic. If you break the queue, you may be causing chaos, which will turn around to hunt you. If you are grabbing all for yourself in spite of others, only a matter of time, you'll come down crumbling before the ones you spite.

You represent a large chunk of people. You may feel you represent just the family you come from but it's more than that. You represent everyone; of those you know, and those you have no knowledge. What you do that affects one man grows in geometric proportions.

Take this illustration for example. A chief chooses to give an aid to a man who has a family of seven. He offers him a million naira. This man being a tinker opens a business that requires

the employ of four people for a start. These four persons are married with children. The one million naira has created opportunity for four families consisting between 15-20 people. This money would send children to school and they would become graduates and turn out to have their families. All these are happening because one man offered to show some good to some other man.

Some families, villages, and towns have purses on which they sponsor their children to school. They make it a collective effort to push out every child through school. The reason is, they understand that each child represents the community and would in turn render the same service for future beneficiaries thus the continuation of the cycle. The community advances with great sons and daughters produced bringing about development for the community as well as the state or nation.

Acquiring the understanding that you don't exist because of you but the advancement of a whole has the capability to model you into a godlike figure. It's not in acquiring much wealth that one obtains respect or reverence. Rather, it's in the number of persons whose life can be stringed to the benefits you have showered.

Think about how detrimental your present action could be to generations unborn. That crowd unborn is counting on you to ensure they have a future to live in. If you are unsure, ask



Obama how he feels to be president. Martin Luther Jnr. realized that he had to work hard the way he had just so that his future sons will sit with the sons of the white and rule America, a feat Obama has achieved.

Just realize that what you are doing affects not just you and your family, it affects a lot more people you can never imagine. Those people are saying you are us.

# YOU ARE YOUR OWN PROPHET

In our prevailing world, there is a craving for prophecy. We want to know the future from today to enable us plan. We often wish that if we could ascertain what's going to happen the next minute, we could escape from future mishaps and perhaps stop them from occurring. We desire a look into the future with so much hope. One saddening truth is that we wait for revelation from some other person to give us light into the direction we should take.

While we may have spiritual leaders with prophetic ministries who prophesy into our lives, we are first our own prophets. The ability to use our words to change our lives is an inherent part of every man. God fused that into us from the beginning because everything He made was from his words. Whatever we say has the dynamics to either positively influence or negatively influence our lives depending on how we say it.

You can make your own self-fulfilling prophecies happen by charging your words with the power to act. How? You may ask.

Can I actually make proclamations and have it come to reality?  
Yes you can. The ability lies in your power to use the right words and target those words.

- **Speaking into life.** Whatever you say has bearing impact on how you or any other person will turn out. The power of life and death is in your tongue. To get positive values, speak positive and stay positive. Negative things also come as a result of our negative use of the tongue. Whatever you want, you can get it by tuning the use of your tongue to your favor.
- **Speak into the present.** Whatever you want, you could say it and get it. But it's not just saying it, its saying it the right way. If you need ten thousand dollars, you won't say "I need ten thousand dollars" you say, "I have ten thousand dollars". Speaking like you've got what you want already speeds up the process of getting what you want. Speak in the present. Use words like, I am, I have, etc. avoid words that refer to an achievement in the future like "I will".
- **Speak continuously.** Continuous speaking of your expectation in the present every time, and as often as possibly, increases the chance of having it come to reality. Keep saying that thing you want like you have it already and repeatedly as often as you can. You will have it just the way you want it.

- **Speak with the time.** Setting a period for which your self-made prophecy should see gives credence to your prophetic ability. The word “now” should be the circle around which your needs have to be met. You might not see the possibility, but when you keep saying what you want for now, that now will arrive before long.
- **Stay connected.** The need to stay connected to a spiritual source cannot be overemphasized. Build a connection with God. Develop faith as a means of receiving from him when and as often as we want. All God desires from us is “just ask.” When we ask we will receive. In asking from God, we could ask amiss which invariably means not all those who ask receive. You can ask right by accepting His supremacy over our lives, believing he is capable of seeing our needs met and confessing our need have being met by him even when we don’t get to see the physical thing we need.

Using your words rightly can make the best impression in your life and those of others. it has immense capability to make you into the model you want to become. Don’t give up in fear that you are incapable of attaining your goals and desire. Keep saying it and expect it to happen now. Even if it fails to happen now, your words are placing present action for a future occurrence. Prophecy!!!

# SOMETIMES YOU CAN BE IMPATIENT

Patience is a great quality that everyone needs. We need to be patient to get results from what we have sacrificed and made so much input. While we so need this quality, to achieve great things require some cool headed impatience.

I picked this line from Abraham Lincoln's letter to his son's teacher. He said, "let him have the courage to be impatient." You may be tinkling your head on why he did not say "let him have the courage to be patient." Lincoln understood that patience does not require any courage as much. One could just quietly sit and be patient, accepting mediocrity as the rule. He knew that if he would have to achieve great things, he would have to go gaga over it. He would need some degree of impatience that requires courage to enact.

When you lead people, as much as you are positive and patient with them, you cannot get the best from them until you show some degree of impatience with their growth and capability.

You will have to stand up to them and tell them at their faces that you want more from them.

It was tough for Lincoln having to work with some crazy persons in his cabinet who were dragging his government down. Some of them were imposed on him by the powers that be (the kingmakers). He accepted them anyway but expected them to work. While he needed to be patient with them, he observed that if he waited too long, he would not get results as soon as he wanted. He had to push them to act by taking the courage to stand up to them and expect results.

Abraham understood as a guiding principle that it gets to point in life when one would have to be impatient. He knew that there was a general ethical consensus on the need for patience as a necessary virtue. He felt his son could be so entangled with this life virtue that he would accept patience as the status quo. He said “teacher, teach this guy that he would have to have some impatience else he won’t get anything out of life.”

The best you want is you standing up and refusing to accept the prevailing status. While you have to be patient sometimes, patience does not work for all the cases. You have to kick your impatient aside and get to work. It won’t be easy trying to be impatient as you may act odd or be considered odd, but you have to know what you want and go for it.

Parents have to be patient with their wards, so teachers say. A child will develop slowly into maturity with time. True, but you can propel that growth by becoming impatient. An impatient parent will say, "My son cannot fail again so I have to do something about it now. I cannot be patient and continue to see you fail. No. let's change school and get new tutors and perhaps I will get home tutors to help." Impatience kicks you to speedy action propelling you to tinker on ways you could get faster better results.

Teachers are some of the most patient people on earth. Imagine how Abraham Lincoln son's teacher could have felt after reading this line "let him have the courage to be impatient." He would have thought like "Mr. Abraham is damn wrong." Teachers do have to know that they have to be impatient sometimes. Yes, they have being taught patience at the teachers college and they have to be patient with all the students to ensure all the students understand. Sometimes the students do not understand and you throw the responsibility to patience. "With time you will understand," they will say.

Will you patiently wait until the time they will understand? When a teacher becomes impatient, he wakes from his slumber and begins to think of what he has to change to become a more effective teacher. He thinks of what method he has to apply to pass across his idea effectively to the students. When he

becomes impatient, he finds solutions to problems that had once eluded him

We do not just have to wait to get results. Yeah, patience is great especially when you have applied all the rules of the game and you are expecting results. Off course the result will come, but it will take some good time. However, impatience drives you to thinking how to get the results now.

While we must learn patience as a useful guiding principle, understand that you need impatience too to balance your patient side. You can afford to be impatient. That's what change causers need.