

**Wellness & Health Department
Write-For-Me Organization**

*Deep Wisdom
For Living*

Portions to give you clarity in life



DEEP WISDOM FOR LIVING

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to God Almighty for the grace and grit to see it to its logical conclusion. It is also dedicated to all who seek clarity in the journey of life in the different spheres which include physical, mental, financial, spiritual and emotional areas.

It is for those who seek to stay healthy as it has in its portions, to aid you achieve your goal. May you find the clarity and direction you seek within its pages.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our gratitude goes to the Wellness and Health Department of Write-For-Me Organization for putting these valuable nuggets together in an easy-to-read form.

We wish to appreciate the CEO of Write-For-Me Organization, Arch Solomon Okpa, our digital father and mentor who has constantly encouraged us to keep reaching to the skies until we achieve our maximum potential. He constantly dreams and in doing so, has permitted member of the Wellness and Health Department to dream. The constant battle against abuse, poverty, oppression, suppression, and gas lighting has led to the WAPOS-G movement in Write-For-Me which has greatly impacted lives.

We appreciate the leadership and membership of the Wellness and Health Department (WHD) who contributed in no small way to ensuring this book became a reality. This book testifies to how it is possible for a project to be planned and executed, against all odds. Namely MC Prof. Valentina Okeigbemen, the head of department who coordinated the project, designed the book cover and wrote on grit. The Deputy head of department, MC Augustine Ameh who compiled the articles and was a major contributor to the book. MC Rev Olufunso Ajibode who assisted in editing the book and writing some articles. Others namely MC Dr. Prisca Okechukwu (the secretary), MC Badejo Bukky Roseline (the assistant secretary), MC Rebecca Jacobs (the financial secretary), MC Janet Adaramola (PRO), MC Prof Olufunke Ola-Davies, MC Prof. Emmanuel Akinade, MC Stella Chukwu, MC Sarah Kase, MC Rev Simeon Kaase, MC Glory Nkuda and MC Adebunmi Ojetunde who all contributed to ensuring the book became a rich resource by writing the articles. Other contributors include MC Phunmie Miah-Ojiodu, MC Elizabeth Olujinmi, MC Mukhtar Iderawumi, MC Dr. Onyinye Onyedi, MC Gabriel Ugwuwangwu and MC Dr. Deborah Jones-Erue.

You are all deeply appreciated. Your contributions are invaluable. Thank you very much.

FOREWARD

Health, according to World Health Organization (WHO), can be defined as, “the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”. This holistic view of health can be expanded to include spiritual and emotional well-being, social connections and a positive quality of life. The book you hold in your hands is one born out of the need to cater to the health needs of the populace. It is a compilation of writings by members of the Wellness and Health department of Write-for-Me organization.

As you commence on this journey, it will look like we are starting the book from the end. The Holy scriptures say “**better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof**” (Ecclesiastes 7:8a, KJV). You will be served with a treatise on retirement. The earlier we are aware that one day, the position or job we presently hold, will no longer be ours, the better it will help make us decide to intentionally plan for life after active employment.

We also have articles which speak to your spiritual wellbeing such as “seize the opportunity” and “the storm is over”. This is followed by well outlined discussions on stress. It tells you how to identify stress and what to do to manage stress effectively.

Next, as part of our contribution to our mental well-being, we delve into “the force of the mind” which tells us that everything in life flows from the mind. “**For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:**” (Proverbs 23:7a). This is followed by articles that help build mental capacity. The article on “mentoring” by MC Prof. Olufunke Ola-Davies is a must read. It gives an in-depth discourse on what mentoring is and how to build a good mentor-mentee relationship. Another explosive article is the one on “personal branding” by MC Mukhtar which speaks to the entrepreneurial minded.

In conclusion, embarking on this journey as you go through the book will help build you physically, mentally and emotionally and bring healing to you. Let the words speak to your soul and bring enlightenment. Should you desire to speak to a counsellor, kindly contact us on +2348037124905 or via <https://wfm.ogapatapata.com/store/ttm-consult>.

I wish you the very best

We are Awake!!!

MC Prof Valentina Okeigbemen
Head, Wellness and Health department
Write-for-Me organization
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JUST BEFORE YOU RETIRE

MC Rev Simeon Kaase

Several reasons informed my voluntary retirement from the Nigeria Police in 2005 after seventeen years of meritorious service. Foremost of these was that, while serving in the Police Force, I observed that after retirement, Police Officers often end up living miserably; this invariably results in them not living for too long before their eventual demise. The few fortunate enough to collect their retirement benefits sometimes become incapacitated due to some chronic or terminal illness occasioned by organ failure. In contrast, some others carry on with lives of self-pity, helplessness, and hopelessness.

As a naive young man in my early twenties, the thought of this alone scared me stiff enough that I was determined not to remain in the Police Force till retirement. For me, it was a decision I made to retire voluntarily while still strong and healthy. Therefore, I began to plan so I would not exit unprepared.

It is interesting to mention that my uncle, who facilitated my recruitment into the Force, died within two years of his retirement. It might also interest you to know that my father served in the Nigerian Army and later converted his service to the Nigeria Police Force, retiring after serving for 35 years. He did not live long before he developed cardiac failure and passed on in 2013. All these further compounded my fears, even though I had already voluntarily exited.

As an inexperienced young man, I thought these service personnel were corrupt, according to the general belief or opinion, and hence, were reaping the fruit of their labor. Indeed, as a serving officer, I struggled to be different rather than tread the path of corruption, and this made me quite uncomfortable, at least with the officers around me. I refused to be mentored in that manner. Most of them appeared to have lost their sense of integrity to corrupt tendencies. This vice could be another reason I decided to disengage from service midway. Timothy Nwan, in his book titled "The Integrity of a

Name," asserts that "A man of integrity must live a blameless life, a life of faithfulness, moral purity, discipline, self-control, live wisely, and have a good reputation." I struggled to live a life of integrity to avoid being infected or, better yet, developing what I call the "Human Integrity Deficiency Syndrome" (HIDS).

Society perceived (in fact, still perceives) members of the Police Force to be so corrupt that nothing or no one could correct the notion. I could not even defend the same, being an eyewitness myself. I didn't know what was obtainable in other sectors of the economy; therefore, I concluded that I should stand with society.

I was born into a family of six, three boys and three girls. My late father, Inspector James Kaase Tyem (rtd.), was a devout Christian. My mother and grandmother were also devout Christians. Our parents instilled Christian values in the six of us; hence, we were morally sound and upright. I grew up to know Christ personally, and this background helped me to eschew evil. I detest and abstain from anything and everything evil. Therefore, I struggled to balance my Christian life with what I saw in the Nigeria Police Force. For me, it was indeed a real struggle. With this brief background, one can understand and see a young man struggling to live a righteous life without a mentor.

The Church do not help matters. The moment they realize you are a member of the Police; they withdraw from you and keep their distance as much as possible. This is simply because of their preconceived notion that you are a corrupt fellow, a sinner.

Before I proceed, let me quickly state here that my thoughts on why Police Officers retire and become incapacitated were utterly wrong. As I advanced in age and knowledge, I soon observed that civil servants generally only live for a short time after retirement. Could that also be a result of corruption? I will address this question and many others in this discourse.

The challenge isn't just peculiar to serving officers in the Police or military; therefore, my judgment about the Police was wrong. I later discovered that corruption and wickedness in the civil service surpass what we see in the Police Force. Regrettably, this includes even religious institutions.

Our concern here is not about corruption. Hence, let me bring my thought to a conclusion. The Police, in fact, the civil service in its entirety, and every other extraction of the society, be it social, economic, etc., is corrupt simply because the culture is corrupt, and the government of the day fans the flame of corruption. This is my opinion.

This book will examine why people retire and fail to live long again. They either develop one sickness they never recover from or remain perpetually poor. Some retirees do not even benefit from their children upon whom they have labored so much. Shall we say it is the plan or intention of God that people suffer in such a manner, even at retirement? We will look at the missing link and suggest a way forward toward enjoyment after service in old age, which I believe is God's intention for His children.

In the western world, people look forward to a happy retirement. The reverse is the case in Nigeria and third-world countries, where people are scared stiff each time the thought of retirement comes to their mind. They change their age repeatedly to enable them to remain in active service. However, there will be no hiding place when nature calls or when age tells on your body. As the famous saying goes, that one cannot cheat nature, Rev. Joshua Dayok describes retirement from active service as scriptural, citing Moses, Samuel, and many others as men of God who had to retire to give way for the younger ones to take over.

This piece was meant originally for those in the Nursing profession as they prepare for retirement. Being a Nurse, I have been privileged to see how many retire and live hopelessly. As a Pastor, I thought this information would also come in handy for pastors alike as the same phenomena apply to them.

As God would have it, an ultimate direction came from above that this piece should address everyone in all professions and aspects of human endeavor. I speak to civil servants, public servants, those in the Military, Police, and every security institution. I also address traders, business people, farmers, students, etc. The reason for this is plausible; whatever it is you happen to engage in, someday, you must retire. The day comes when you cannot carry out those duties as you used to.

God Almighty is the only Being or Personality with no beginning nor end. For everything that you do, which has a start, indeed has an end, and no matter how long it takes, it will surely come someday. God, in His wisdom, planned and executed His work of creation logically and chose to rest on the seventh day. God used this to set an example to teach us that rest is crucial in life.

SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY

MC Ameh Augustine Sunday

Opportunities are one of the means to our destiny available to us. Therefore, they are not to be neglected nor taken with slackness. We must develop the right attitude towards opportunities before we can always take advantage of them to fulfil destiny. Apostle Paul made a striking comment on this in the Bible. He said:

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Galatians 6:10

First, there are things we can only do by opportunity. It is our responsibility to make use of the opportunity when it shows up. But then, we also need to be able to recognize the opportunity. You can only take advantage of an opportunity when you are able to recognize it as an opportunity.

Opportunities are God's favour in disguise. They don't come with a label that lets you know they are opportunities for you, neither do they announce themselves to alert you. Most times, they come in forms of necessities, difficulties, problems or tests. That's why we can be easily discouraged from our opportunities except we develop the right attitude to the challenges of life.

If you cannot recognize your opportunity when it shows up, you will ignore it and miss the future it has for you. There are individuals, in the Bible, who fulfilled destiny by being able to recognize their opportunities.

i. Joseph saw the opportunity to interpret dreams in prison (**Genesis 40:6-8**) and eventually, he interpreted Pharaoh's dream. He also gave counsel to Pharaoh on what steps he should take in order to avert the impending seven years famine and was made the Prime Minister in Egypt (**Genesis 41:14-44**).

ii. David saw opportunity in the challenge of Goliath (**1 Samuel 17:20-37**), he seized the opportunity and he became the champion (**1 Samuel 18:6-7**), who also reigned as king over the people (**2 Samuel 5:1-4**)

iii. Joshua saw an opportunity in serving Moses and made himself Moses's Personal Assistant, always at his service (**Exodus 33:11**) and he was the one eventually called by the LORD to succeed Moses (**Joshua 1:1-6**)

iv. Mordecai saw an opportunity in the contest of a wife for the king and he prepared Esther (**Esther 2:1-8**) to become the king's wife (**Esther 2:12-18**) and she was instrumental to the deliverance of the children of Israel in the Province (**Esther 7:1-10**).

When your opportunity shows up, it usually appeals to your God-given ability or passion. That's how you recognize your opportunity. Otherwise, the opportunity is not for you. Let the right person for it, have it.

However, it is not enough to recognize your opportunity; it is essentially for you to take advantage of it. Therefore, learn to go for your opportunity whenever it shows up. Remember, opportunities do not come to those who wait but they are captured by those who dare to attack.

It is frustrating when you have the ability but lack the opportunity. Sometimes, it is because you cannot recognize your opportunities that you seem to lack opportunities. The truth is that, you allow your opportunities to slip into other hands because of your slackness.

As you go through this day, desire to seize your opportunities in life and pray earnestly for grace to be able to recognize them each time they come, no matter the form they take in Jesus Christ's name. Amen!

THE STORM IS OVER

MC Ameh Augustine Sunday

Situations that do not only tend to take our peace away and make us restless but also make us feel unsafe and endangered are storms. Such situations make us unsettled, panicking and running from pillar to post, looking for help. Let's see this from the experience of the disciples of Jesus on the sea.

36 Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him.

37 And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.

38 But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?"

*39 Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm." **Mark 4:36-39***

The storms of life are unexpected and can devastate you. The disciples never bargained for it, yet it came. That is not a reason to avoid it. If you do, it will only deteriorate and make life worse for you. But there is a right way to go about it.

The situation deteriorated while the disciples battled with it. Evidentially, "*the wave beat into the boat, so that it was already filling.*" At this point, they began to feel unsafe and endangered. So, they beckoned to Jesus for help.

Situations that tend to defy your smartness and skillfulness are usually extraordinary or spiritual and require a supernatural approach. The best we can do about them is the same that the disciples did: turn it over to Jesus. The outcome is, victory over the storm.

*Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!"
And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. **Mark 4:39***

Jesus didn't use effort over the situation but exercised faith with authority through the spoken Word over the situation. This confirms that, the storm was beyond human efforts and not ordinary. Regardless, Jesus made it a great calm. The journey went smoothly for them as a result.

The expression, "**a great calm**" means to be settled and struggle no more. That is what you get when you turn the situation over to Jesus. Affirmatively, Apostle Paul said:

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

*7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. **Philippians 4:6-7***

The peace of God is the same peace that keeps God settled and confident on His throne that nothing can defeat His purpose. That is the kind of peace Jesus came to give us. It sets us above the fear and anxiety that the situation of things tries to bring into us. But you must learn to turn the situation over to Jesus.

Jesus is the Prince of peace. He demonstrated this over the storm that rose against them in the sea. He commanded, "**peace be still**" and there was a great calm as a result.

A great calm is an indication that, the storm is over. Jesus made it possible. When He steps into the situation for you, the storm will be over and there will be a great calm for you. It means to have peace within and without.

When the storm is over, you do not only have peace without but also enjoy peace within. In fact, that is the proof to show that the storm is over. It takes your struggles away and fills you with assurance of a successful ending or a brighter future.

It doesn't matter what the situation has been and the troubles you have been going through, an end has come to them. God is saying, the storm is over and a great calm has come for you.

The journey of the remaining period of your life will be without struggle for you and you will make great progress as a result of the storm being over. You will not end your life in frustration but will have a successful ending in Jesus Christ's name.

STRESS THE SILENT KILLER

MC Badejo Bukky Roseline

Introduction

Things that cause us stress are called stressors. Stress affects everyone, young and old, rich and poor. Life is full of stress. Stress is an everyday fact of life that we must all deal with. It comes in all shapes and sizes; even our thoughts can cause us stress and make the human body more susceptible to illness.

What is stress?

Stress can be defined as a process in which environmental demands strain an organism's adaptive capacity resulting in both psychological demands as well as biological changes that could place at risk for illness.

There are three perspectives regarding stress. They are environmental stress, psychological (emotional) stress and biological stress.

Environmental stress perspective emphasizes assessment of environmental situations or experiences that are objectively related to substantial adaptive demands.

Psychological stress perspective emphasizes people's subjective evaluation of their ability to cope with demands presented to them by certain situations and experiences.

Biological stress perspective emphasizes the function of certain physiological systems in the body that are regulated by both psychologically and physically demanding conditions.

Psychological (emotional) stress is a major contributing factor to the six leading causes of death in the world; i.e cancer, coronary heart disease, accidental injuries, respiratory disorders, cirrhosis of the liver and suicide.

Not all stress has negative effect. There are two types of stress, they are;

1. Positive Stress.
2. Negative Stress.

Positive Stress is when the body tolerates stress and uses it to overcome lethargy or enhance performance, then such a stress is positive, healthy and challenging.

Positive Stress forces us to adapt and thus to increase the strength of our adaptation mechanisms, warns us that we are not coping well and that a lifestyle change is warranted if we are to maintain optimal health.

Negative Stress is the stress that exceeds our ability to cope, fatigue body systems and cause behavioral or physical problems.

This harmful stress is called DISTRESS.

DISTRESS produces overreaction, confusion, poor concentration, anxiety, poor performance and depression.

Whenever the body is under chronic or negative stress, the hypothalamus send signals to the adrenal glands to release the stress hormones which are adrenaline and cortisol. These hormones rev up the heartbeat and send blood to the necessary organs. But if the hypothalamus refuses to send signals to the systems to go back to normal and the stressor doesn't go away, this result into illness.

Mental or Behavioral Symptoms of Stress

1. Feeling overwhelmed.
2. Being more emotional than usual.
3. Trouble keeping track of things or remembering.
4. Trouble making decisions, trouble solving problems, trouble in maintaining concentration and trouble getting your work done.
5. Using alcohol or drugs to relieve your emotional stress.

What happens to the body during stress?

1. Aches and pains.
2. Chest pains or a feeling like your heart is racing.
3. Exhaustion or trouble sleeping.
4. Headaches, dizziness or shaking.
5. High blood pressure.

6. Muscle tension or jaw clenching.
7. Stomach or digestive problems.
8. Trouble having sex.

Stress Management Techniques

1. Listen to inspirational music.
2. Take a quick walk.
3. Breathe deeply. Slow, deep breaths can help lower blood pressure and heart rate.
4. Close your eyes to regain calm and focus.
5. Do some yoga by putting your feet up against the wall while lying on the floor.
6. Eat some dark chocolate. It regulates level of stress cortisol and stabilizes metabolism.
7. Meditate in a quiet place.
8. Laugh; laughter can increase blood flow and boost your immunity.
9. Chew gum: a few minutes of chewing can actually reduce anxiety and lower cortisol levels.
10. Talk to a friend.

Do you experience Anxiety, Headaches, Nervousness, Fatigue, Insomnia, Panic attacks, Low sex drive, Unnecessary weight gain, Depression, Suffering from an unexplained illness?

Do you experience suicidal thoughts? Please take quick action NOW.

If you are in need of counselling, kindly contact the Wellness and Health department.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

MC Adebunmi Ojetunde

Stress is part of our lives. It is normal to come across unpleasant situations that cause physical and mental strain. Some of these stressors could be illnesses, heartbreak, bereavement, financial struggles, marital challenges, joblessness, work pressure, to mention a few. We all get stressed but this could both positively or negatively affect our regular lives.

In some cases, you become stressed because you are having a healthy reaction to a situation. Healthy stress gives you that pressure that stretches your body to accomplish tasks that you ordinarily would have been sluggish about. It helps you discover and harness innate qualities and abilities you never thought existed. It is usually short-lived, once the task is completed, the pressure fades away.

Unhealthy or negative stress, on the other hand, makes you disorganized and you might end up not completing that task effectively. It is not easy to manage and doesn't go away easily. It is harmful to the body because it takes a toll on the physical, mental and emotional health of the victim - leaving the individual in a despicable state.

Chronic stress, if unchecked, can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity, insomnia and the likes.

How do you know you are experiencing chronic stress? When you notice muscle tension or pain, headache, fatigue, stomach upset, anxiety, restlessness, lack of motivation, loss of focus, memory loss, anger, touchiness, depression, food binging or picking, drug or alcohol misuse and social withdrawal, then know that your stress is chronic.

The ability to handle or control stress is called stress management. Stressful conditions can be frustrating. It is therefore, necessary that you learn to prevent and, then, know something about managing stress. Learn techniques that will help you live a near stress-free, happy and healthy life.

Here are some various ways to deal with stress:

1. Identify your personal triggers (stressors) and avoid them.
2. Learn to relax your muscles by taking a warm bath.

3. Practice deep breathing.
4. Plan your time and manage your resources well.
5. Eat and sleep well.
6. Slow down when necessary - take a break.
7. Avoid procrastination.
8. Have time for hobbies - relaxation.
9. Talk about your problems and try to go easy on yourself.

However, if all these do not help, please consult your doctor.

Are you in need of someone to talk to? A problem shared is half solved. Let's talk at the Wellness and Health counselling hub.

**THE FORCE OF THE MIND:
ONE OF THE MANY TRUTHS ABOUT THE MIND.**

MC Dr. Deborah Jones-Erue

The mind is the part of a person that enables him to be aware of the world and his experiences, as well as being able to think and to feel. In other words, it is the part of a person that makes it possible for him or her to think, feel emotions, and understand things.

Furthermore, it is the faculty of consciousness. When it's conscious, then there is an awareness of something. In lieu of this, the MIND can actually be tamed or trained. That is why people will say, "Stop blaming the devil for your wrong decisions or actions; because it can be controlled" (SELF-CONTROL).

Almost everything flows from the mind, including, but not limited to, Diligence and Laziness or Success and Failure.

One way to be in total control of the mind is imbibing the power of force.

Force is the fundamental result of an interaction between two objects, while power is an expression of energy consumed over time (work), of which force is an element. Work occurs when there is a force causing movement of an object.

Therefore, $\text{Power} = \text{Force} \times \text{Velocity}$, which means power can be improved by increasing force or velocity.

Power is a representation of the rate at which force does work. Therefore, power is directly proportional to force and increases if the rate at which the force does work increases.

Life is about adding force to whatever you do. You must learn to force things into place or perspective.

Listen, things should not force you; it's you that must start the positive interaction between stuffs both in your mind and head, as the case maybe. (Read 2 Corinthians 10:5).

The "power of mind" generally refers to the capacity or ability of the human mind to influence or shape various aspects of life, including thoughts, emotions, behavior, and even external circumstances. It is the ability to comprehend and learn.

If you don't add force to the mind, mediocrity will set in.

Mediocrity should not be an option. Learn to increase the force in your Mind. The more force, the more power you exude.

Having power over your mind will mean, you being in total control of EVERYTHING.

From today, learn to increase force and make sure to exert it.

NOTE: Learning is a process. You will get at it one day. Just take it one step at a time. Very soon, you will have a mastering of your mind.

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**PERSONAL BRANDING:
THE KEY TO UNLOCKING YOUR PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS**

MC Mukhtar Iderawumi

In today's competitive job market, having a strong personal brand is crucial to standing out and achieving professional success. Your personal brand is the unique combination of skills, experience, and personality that sets you apart from others in your industry. It's the way you present yourself to the world, and it can make or break your career.

So, how do you build a strong personal brand? Here are some key strategies to help you get started:

1. Define Your Target Audience:

The first step in building a strong personal brand is to identify your target audience. Who are the people you want to reach with your brand? What are their needs, interests, and pain points? Understanding your target audience will help you tailor your brand to their needs and increase your chances of success.

2. Develop Your Unique Value Proposition:

Your unique value proposition (UVP) is what sets you apart from others in your industry. It's the unique combination of skills, experience, and personality that make you different. Your UVP could be your expertise in a particular area, your ability to solve a specific problem, or your unique perspective on your industry. Whatever it is, make sure it's something that sets you apart and makes you memorable.

3. Create a Consistent Online Presence:

In today's digital age, having a strong online presence is crucial to building a successful personal brand. This means creating a professional website, LinkedIn profile, and other social media accounts that showcase your skills, experience, and personality. Make sure your online presence is consistent across all platforms, and that you regularly update your content to keep your audience engaged.

4. Network Strategically:

Networking is a key part of building a strong personal brand. Attend industry events, join

relevant groups and organizations, and connect with other professionals in your field. The goal is to build relationships with people who can help you advance your career and grow your brand.

5. Be Authentic and Consistent:

Authenticity is key to building a strong personal brand. Be true to yourself and your values, and make sure your online presence and communication style are consistent with who you are. Consistency builds trust and credibility, which are essential for a successful personal brand.

6. Use Storytelling to Connect with Your Audience:

Storytelling is a powerful tool for connecting with your audience and building your personal brand. Share your experiences, successes, and challenges in a way that resonates with your target audience. Use anecdotes and examples to illustrate your skills and expertise, and make sure your stories are authentic and relatable.

7. Monitor and Adjust Your Brand:

Your personal brand is not a static entity; it's a living, breathing thing that needs to be nurtured and adjusted over time. Monitor your online presence and adjust your strategy as needed to ensure your brand is staying relevant and effective.

In conclusion, building a strong personal brand is essential for professional success in today's competitive job market. By defining your target audience, developing your unique value proposition, creating a consistent online presence, networking strategically, being authentic and consistent, using storytelling to connect with your audience, and monitoring and adjusting your brand, you can build a personal brand that will help you achieve your career goals.

DON'T GIVE UP

MC Gabriel Ugwuwangwu

Paying a keen attention to children at infancy while they struggle to learn how to stand and walk, I discovered that they employ much energy and persistence. Though they fall many times but they never give up. Sometimes, they sustain injuries yet it does not make them loose focus. This persistent attitude of children reveals clearly the reality of life's unstable journey with its ups and downs. This journey calls our attention to persevere in life's struggles, no matter how hard it may be. The world is never a bed of roses. It is up and down. Life requires faith in oneself, hard work, perseverance and courage before success could be achieved.

Life comes with contradictions, disappointments and oppositions that can demoralize, mar and confuse an unconvinced mind in his/her quest for success. Indeed, nothing good comes easily. It is true that hard work pays, but success is achieved when hard work merges with determination and perseverance, irrespective of the odds. A popular nursery school poem says "if at first you don't succeed, don't give up but, try, try, try again.

The possibility of falling shows the vulnerability of man but the ability to rise again gives one the litany of experiences and testimony of victories. Dear friends, do not remain where you have fallen in your life adventures, rise and pick up your broken pieces and move on; you will have a testimony tomorrow. Don't say no when God is still saying yes to your life. Don't give up, no matter what. No successful man or woman records successes and achievements without experiencing failures at one stage of life or the other. No matter the situation, create the spirit of perseverance and doggedness which must centre on the following:

1. Personal conviction that, I can make it; if others can, I can too.
2. Applying sincerity in all dealings, even when others prove otherwise.
3. Working with relevant people of like-minds, who can assist you achieve the goals.
4. Review the successes and strengths of your business or adventure periodically and block every avenue that failure may enter.
5. Always working by the grace of God, knowing that human effort and activities are imperfect and baseless without God.

6. Seek opportunities to develop yourself and face the challenges of disappointment with hope for better days ahead.

Above all, life is like a stage with different presentations at different stages. Therefore, never allow the frustration of one stage to terminate your brighter hope of other beautiful adventures tomorrow. Do not give up; it is not the end of life.

PERSEVERANCE

MC Phunmie Miah-Ojiodu

What is Perseverance?

Persistence in doing something, despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.

Illustration: "his perseverance with the technique illustrates his single-mindedness"

Synonym (English Dictionary)

Tenacity

Persistence

Doggedness

Pertinacity

Tenaciousness

Components of perseverance

Determination

Resolution

Passion

Goal-mindedness

Dedication

Objectivity

Staying power

Focus

How to Persevere

How to develop this skill looks quite tricky but it's a practice and determination to see result. When the odds come and you need to find perseverance to help you move on. Look towards the following.

- i. Recall past success.

You must have succeeded at something before. So persevering to achieve a goal may just require another step further to get the result of the goal at hand. Encourage yourself with your previous success and find the strength to move on.

ii. Seek guidance from those who you know understand you and your goal.

Many times, when challenges come, we want to question the authenticity of our goal, like saying, 'Am I sure I'm doing the right thing?', 'does this really worth all these stress?'

It's okay to ask those questions but bounce it off on someone who can help dislodge your confusion and set perspective to your thoughts. Of course, someone who will not be biased and sentimental about your thoughts.

iii. Don't stop, keep moving even if it's just little steps.

Moving or not moving on with something starts from the mind. The moment you discard an idea or goal from your mind, it becomes difficult to make progress. Ensure you're processing it till the huge step to take is clearer.

iv. Set a reasonable pace.

Movement must be calculated because you don't want to have a big crash that is too fatal to get up from. Hence, stay on a reasonable plan and verify each achievement. Every achievement ticked gives you momentum and dictates where and when to increase your speed on the goal.

v. Be creative to redirect your approach to reaching the goal.

Change, they say, is a constant thing. "Rigidity kills right duty". "Doing something same way and expect to get a different result is futility". All this quotes are pointers to creativity in achieving a goal. Know that scenarios cannot always be the same; so the need to redirect your approach. Considering new technologies and current innovation in your approach to getting to where you're going is key.

vi. Be patient, don't be too hard on yourself... give things time to play out.

Fast route and short cuts most times lack credibility and thorough diligence for repeat success. So don't be in a hurry to get to the end without understanding the means.

vii. Focus... remember, you're unique and master of what you know how to do best.

"Your achievement can only be yours when it's flavoured with your uniqueness". Staying focused on your goal without swinging to other people's lane is what will take you to your destination.

Benefits of Perseverance

Perseverance builds your self-belief and self-esteem.

Perseverance helps you overcome failures and setbacks and helps learn from your mistakes.

Perseverance can also help you develop resilience, confidence, and self-discipline.

Perseverance helps in the development of growth mindset

It's what keeps us going when things get hard.

"You own your success when you pull through on the street of Perseverance"

Sampling how people persevere through harsh economy.

I will share three among the responses we got.

Tosin: I simply focus on my needs, I don't just buy anything I want but work my budget to cater for things that are essential for living, like food, rent, children's education and the likes.

Fred: Harsh economy always suggests illicit act and fraudulent practices but my foot-hold is my values and faith. I remind myself of values, like honesty, modesty, righteousness, hard work and belief in God. These help me to remain focused and give me hope for a better tomorrow.

Olumide: Desperate time they say calls for desperate measures. This is not in the negative; it is referring to planning and process. Many times, I just set new plan and follow the process. I try not to do things spontaneously but go through the process... this assures me of the outcome at the end of the day, regardless of how long it may take.

Key points from those interviews are:

- Focus on the needs
- Hold on to your values and faith
- Have a plan and follow the process

Conclusion

Don't build confidence in your weakness

Song: Teach me to be strong - David Omodunmiju

Stay focus on the goal - see possibilities and put your effort on that.

Count the gains instead of the losses, what has worked rather than what has not worked

Re-strategize on what has not worked - be flexible to change style.

Realize and celebrate your growth - see that you're growing through your challenges as you persevere.

10

THE PRICE

MC Ameh Augustine Sunday

Champions are not born but are made. There is a price to pay for the crown you want to wear. Otherwise, you will only be daydreaming. You may carry the potential that is capable of making you a champion in life but if you fail to pay the price, you will live and die like a mediocre. There is no prize without a price. Apostle Paul says:

24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it.

25 And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown

26 Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air.

*27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. **1 Corinthians 9:24-27***

Don't get attracted by the crown without considering the price to pay for it. The crown is only a motivation; it is meant to inspire you to perspire and persevere. In the absence of this, you will only be fantasizing.

We celebrate success but fail to ask about the struggles behind it. This has only resulted in ambitions that make us desperate to do anything (most of which are wrong) to succeed. The struggles behind the success can be a great motivation for you if you get to know about it.

In the text above, Apostle Paul gives us a hint on the struggles behind the success with the description of what our lifestyle should be. It includes the following:

SELF DISCIPLINE - Your greatest enemy is you. There are things about you that can make you never succeed. You must discipline yourself about them. This is where the struggle begins.

Naturally, we, humans, tend more to things that can destroy us than things that can build us. This tendency can only be reversed with self-discipline.

It takes discipline to rise up and do what you are supposed to do and work hard at it. Otherwise, you will lazy around and waste opportunities. Self-discipline will help you pay the price for your success.

FOCUS - Success demands focus, of necessity. You can't afford to live anyhow if you want to succeed. There is a way successful people live. That is the only way you can succeed and wear the crown. Paul says, "Run in such a way that you may obtain it."

Success is with principles. There are rules to obey if you must succeed. Affirmatively, Apostle Paul says, "*And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.*" **(2 Timothy 2:5)**

It takes focus to strive according to the rules. That is because focus is being mindful of your goals and your plans to achieve them. It therefore makes you live as one who knows what he wants and where he is going.

You will fall and fail several times before you eventually succeed. It takes focus for you to rise when you fall and try again when you fail until you succeed.

Focus makes you objective with things you do; to ensure that they are more of things that can help you achieve your goal and not things that will only waste your time.

RESOLUTENESS - You cannot choose the life that can make you succeed unless you are resolute about succeeding.

Success is by choice and not by chance. This can only be evident by your lifestyle or how you live. There are things you cannot break free from until you are resolute about succeeding.

Resoluteness is with resilience. When you are resolute, you will also be resilient. Thus, you ensure the lifestyle of success and become successful at last.

Being resolute means your mind is made up to succeed and you are not willing to give up or accept defeat to anything. That's why you learn to rise when you fall and try again when you fail until you succeed.

Success is not a destination but a journey. It will take you through some odd experiences, which are necessary for you to pay the required price to succeed.

PREPARE AHEAD

MC Ameh Augustine Sunday

Waiting for what you want to do is not the right attitude. You need to start approaching it from where you are, step by step. The first thing is to get yourself ready for it or else, the time will come before you realize the situation is beyond you because you fail to prepare yourself for it. Therefore, rather than waiting for time to come, you should learn to prepare ahead of time. The book of Proverbs says something challenging about this. It is written:

Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house. Proverbs 24:27

This Scripture shows us the place of preparation in achieving our goals in life. When preparation precedes performance, success is usually the outcome. Therefore, it is only those who aim at success that learn to prepare themselves.

Lack of preparation is the reason you are always repeating the circle of failures in your pursuit. To break the circle, you must give preference to preparation. Unless you are well prepared, you cannot do well in your pursuit. Proper preparation prevents poor performance.

We determine our fate through preparation. The result you get is always the outcome of your level of preparation. Whether or not you will be successful in life depends on your preparation. Picture the ten virgins: five of them went with the groom while the other five missed the opportunity. The difference was their level of preparation (**Matthew 25:1-12**).

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. Your preparation depends on your plan. The reason most people do not prepare well and continue to fail in their pursuit is that they don't know how or what it takes to prepare. Let me help you with some tips.

HOW TO PREPARE

There are certain specific steps that can help you prepare well and achieve your goal in life. They include:

* Identify your purpose - what are you preparing for?

- * Set your goals - what do you want to achieve?
- * Determine your activities to direct your actions and avoid distractions.
- * Secure the right items for your preparation - what to prepare yourself with.
- * Assign yourself with tasks to be accomplished at intervals for personal assessment.
- * Be time conscious because you have to be ready before time.
- * Evaluate your overall preparation to determine your readiness.

Preparation is therefore a very serious work that requires proper planning. It is not to be handled with levity and loose hands but with utmost diligence and focus, although it also depends on your purpose and pursuit.

Once you know the task that is before you and what you want to achieve in it, you can decide the right preparation for you with some action plans.

You can't afford to wait for time but begin to prepare ahead of time if you really want to excel. That is how to secure the future and what it holds for you.

Roosevelt says, "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." You can only show that by your actions.

Those who wait for the future to come cannot attain what the future holds for them. Waiting for the future to come will only make it come and meet you where you are but when you approach the future as it comes, you will be going further and getting better.

This year is approaching the end and a new year is imminent. You can make the New Year a truly new beginning for new heights. It depends on how you approach the New Year before it comes. Therefore, prepare yourself for the New Year but first, you have to take stock of the outgoing year and make your assessment. The result you get will help you know how to prepare for the New Year.

As you go through this day, desire to make a difference and pray earnestly for grace to always prepare yourself for the success you have been destined for in Jesus Christ's name. Amen!

HOW TO STOP YOURSELF FROM WANTING TO BE LIKE OTHER PEOPLE.

MC Rebecca Jacobs

It is natural to have moments when you admire someone. It may be because they are loved by many or because there is a charisma they have. They are most times fulfilling their God-ordained destiny. And we find ourselves wishing or praying to be like them.

Many a time, parents tell their children, "Why don't you be like your brother?"

"Why don't you be like your sister?"

"Why don't you be like your friend?"

This may be because they see a quality in the person that they will want their child to have also, forgetting that everyone (including their own children) has his/her own special gifting. Everyone has his/her own struggles and challenges. You can't possibly know what someone else's life is really like because you don't walk in their shoes. So everyone is special because we all have our own unique strengths that make us so.

Utilize your own strengths and qualities to achieve your goals. You see some celebrities and TV stars, and you wish to have their life. You never know what they are struggling with. You don't know the whole story.

Let's even say they are living their best life. It will also mean that they have gone through some processes and some procedures. The principles of life don't have respect for persons. When you apply the principles of life, it will work for you, no matter who you are.

No matter the family you're born into, the principles of life are like buttons. When you press them, you will get the same results that every other person gets when they press them.

Hence, I will list some points on how to stop yourself from wanting to be like someone else. These tips will make you to become the best version of yourself.

1. Reflect on your own values and beliefs. Think about what is important to you. What makes you happy?

2. Stop comparing yourself to others. Everyone's journey is different. You are uniquely special.

3. Surround yourself with positive influences - those that support and inspire you.

4. Set your own goals. Focus on what you want to achieve and work towards it.

5. Practice self-compassion.

You need to be kind and understanding towards your own self. Remember, everyone makes mistakes sometimes. So, the fact that you have made some mistakes in the past doesn't mean you should dwell there. You need to forgive yourself just like you would forgive any other person.

You need to dust yourself, pick yourself up, and move on.

6. Try new things. Self-discovery is an ongoing process. So it takes time, it takes effort. You need to go on a journey of self-discovery.

If you haven't discovered your purpose in life, you are not yet living. Therefore, you have to first go on a journey of discovery. Discover your own potential, your goals, and your purpose in life.

Focus on your goals.

Focus on what your dream is.

That way, you'll be less conscious of others. You now have a goal.

What are the things you would like but have not tried?

Go on adventures. Challenge yourself. Do something fun. Some people think you can't have fun doing the right things. It is because they are only acquainted with the wrong kind of fun.

STARVE YOUR FEAR

MC Adebunmi Ojetunde

Fear is a natural response to danger, it could also be triggered by past experiences, traumas, failures, deaths, insecurities, the unknown, past disappointments and so on. Fear brings torment (**1 John 4:18**); it is one of the favorite weapons of man's arch-enemy, Satan. He makes you believe what is untrue and instigates you to imagine the worst of a situation. Having been described as: False Experience Appearing Real, fear has no real substance, because it is not based on truth.

Fear creates unnecessary panic, anxiety and nervous disorder. It is destructive and deadly. It can make your life wretched and distort your personality. It is capable of rendering you useless, sick, unmotivated and faithless.

That being said, you need to be intentional about the kind of emotions you nurture. Don't nurse fear like a pet or a baby. Ditch your fears and view your life with the lenses of faith.

As a Christian - a believer in Christ Jesus, it is an anomaly to live with or cower in fear, because "*God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind*" (**2 Timothy 1:7**). Child of God, you have power in the Name of Jesus, power by the Blood of Jesus and power in the Word of God to confront any situation that assails. Why then should you allow fear to demoralize you and prevent you from becoming who He wants you to become?

Have you been living in fear? You need to starve those fears until they die a natural death. How? Start by holding on to God's word, like your life depends on it - actually, your life depends on it: "*For they are life to those that find them and health to all their flesh*" (**Proverbs 4:22**).

Scripture also says, "*Be strong and of a good courage, fear not nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee nor forsake thee*" (**Deuteronomy 31:6**). Can you take a minute to take this in? Let this sink into your mind - God is with you. He has always been with you (**Matthew 28:20**), and he can do all things. So, trust God enough to let go of your fears.

When you notice that fear is about to be evoked in your heart, meet it halfway with the word of God. Speak the word to it and watch it evaporate.

Another thing you should take note of is that, you can't trust what you don't know. You

need to diligently study God's word. Search out His word, because He has a word for every situation you find yourself in. In fact, your level of faith depends on the level of God's word you have taken in; for faith comes only by hearing and absorbing the word of God (**Romans 10:17**).

How else can you starve your fears? Talk to God about it. Allow yourself to be vulnerable with God. He is your Father. Tell Him how scared you are; how that situation is giving you sleepless nights. Tell Him why you are afraid to take that step forward.

Talk to God about everything and anything. Trust me, He is interested in what you have to say. He likes it when you are vulnerable with Him and He is eager to solve your problems. When you talk to God, it brings some sort of relief, even when you have not seen the answers to your request.

Prayer is therapeutic. Do it often and you will rid your mind of fear.

THERE'S NO SHORTCUT TO DESTINY

MC Ameh Augustine Sunday

We essentially need God to guide us on the steps we take towards becoming accomplished in life. The knowledge of His will in us should suffice. If you truly mean it, you will live by the knowledge of God's will in you and let it guide your steps in life so you do not do anything that can jeopardize His plan for you. Jacob was at fault in this in his quest to become successful in life.

God already foretold of his advantage over Esau his brother while they were still in the womb. Rather than allow God to carry out His plan while he cooperates with God, Jacob chose to go by his own plan: he supplanted Esau, his brother.

First, he bought Esau's birthright with his red stew. He would have been kind enough to share his food with his dying brother but he chose to take advantage of his brother's situation and vulnerability and stole his birthright from him. The Bible says:

29 One day when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau arrived home exhausted and hungry from a hunt.

30 Esau said to Jacob, "I'm starved! Give me some of that red stew you've made." (This was how Esau got his other name, Edom--"Red.")

31 Jacob replied, "All right, but trade me your birthright for it."

32 "Look, I'm dying of starvation!" said Esau. "What good is my birthright to me now?"

33 So Jacob insisted, "Well then, swear to me right now that it is mine." So Esau swore an oath, thereby selling all his rights as the firstborn to his younger brother.

*34 Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and lentil stew. Esau ate and drank and went on about his business, indifferent to the fact that he had given up his birthright. **Genesis 25:29-34** (NLT)*

That was how Esau lost his birthright to Jacob. By careful observation, it could be concluded that, Esau deserved what he got because he was nonchalant to his birthright but more concerned about his survival for the moment than what the future held for him.

Nonetheless, God never supported Jacob's move. God doesn't give ideas such as Jacob did. It was an act of selfishness and wickedness. Jacob must have thought of compensating for his shortcomings. Naturally, he was not as hardworking as his brother, Esau and that must have made him bother about what would become of his future. But he had skills: he was a good cook and actor, like he portrayed when he disguised himself into Esau.

While Jacob made that move, God was watching him to see how far he could go with his efforts. Then, he did the worst when he disguised himself to be Esau, his brother and supplanted him as a result. The Bible says:

21 And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.

22 And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, the voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.

*23 And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands: so he blessed him. **Genesis 27:21-23***

That was not how God intended to elevate Jacob. It was Jacob's trick. Nevertheless, he paid dearly for it in Laban's house, where he ran for safety from his brother Esau.

His first twenty years in Laban's house was spent in servitude. He laboured without being paid. It means twenty years of his life wasted. But he was yet to learn his lesson. And so, he continued with his tricks by which he diverted Laban's flock to himself through a cunning and crafty way of compensating himself (making Laban pay for all his years of service with him). Then, at this point, God stirred an adversity against him in Laban's house, which made him flee from Laban.

But he already got the blessing from Isaac! Why were things going that way with him? It was this same feeling that urged him to seek an encounter with the LORD (**Genesis 32:24-28**)

The blessing Jacob received from Isaac, his father, was only hanging on him until he had an encounter with the LORD, where his name was changed from Jacob (the supplanter) to Israel (a prince).

The encounter made all the difference for him, whereas all his tricks failed him. Had he learned to walk in the ways of God all along, he would have saved himself the stress and also not wasted his time unnecessarily.

There is no shortcut to destiny. What you think to be a shortcut eventually turns out to be a long journey as you can see in the case of Jacob. I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God that you abandon every ungodly means and seek to follow due process always while you trust God to prosper your ways.

As you go through life, desire to fulfil your destiny and pray earnestly for grace to always walk in the perfect will of God for you in Jesus Christ's name. Amen!

DO YOU HAVE A MENTOR?

MC Prof. Valentina Okeigbemen

This is a question that begs for an answer especially in this present day. A mentor is somebody who has qualities you admire. A mentor is someone who is willing to follow you up and walk the journey with you. A mentor is someone who is disciplined and will take time to ensure that the mentee improves in the areas that need attention.

In each area of life, having a mentor can make a difference between succeeding and failing. This is because a mentor brings the wealth of experience and expertise into the relationship. You can select an area in your life where you need mentoring and seek one expert to coach you in that area. In my journey in the world of academia, I suffered because I realized late that I needed a mentor in my field. This led to delays in my progress as an academic. I was sharing my woes with a Christian brother when he asked me, Who is your mentor in your field of study? I was taken aback and suddenly realized I had no mentor. No one I was looking up to. I began to search for one and was fortunate to find one. This led to my advancement in my field.

As one who is being mentored, there are qualities a mentee should have in order to have a flourishing relationship. A mentee should be humble enough to take corrections from the mentor. A mentee should not take the mentor for granted. A mentee should have qualities in the mentor he respects and admires. If this is not the case, that relationship would not flourish.

In Write-for-Me, we have the privilege of having a digital mentor and father, Arch Solomon Okpa fondly called Ogapatapata. As affiliates, we must do all we can to nurture the relationships we have with our father and with each other. This can bring improvement in our lives. Wellness and Health Department (WHD) has experts who can coach you in areas you need attention. We also have a Life Coaching Course which addresses each area of concern. Make use of the opportunity.

Take time to consider this question, Do you have a mentor?

A DREAM FOR THE FUTURE

MC Ameh Augustine Sunday

In the midst of hatred from his brothers, God gave Joseph a dream about his future. Although he didn't know the interpretation of what the dream meant, he was certain that the dream had significance. Therefore, he approached his brothers for necessary assistance but they were unfriendly to him. The Bible says:

5 Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more.

6 So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed:

7 There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf."

*8 And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. **Genesis 37:5-8***

Joseph's disposition to his dream shows how naive and insensitive he was as a teenager. He knew how unfriendly and mean his brothers were to him and still shared his dream with them; not minding that the dream favoured him over them. He certainly caused more hatred for himself as a result because his brothers saw his dream as being proud and arrogant.

Most of us still make such mistakes. Never share your dream with a person when you are not certain of the person's interest in you. Otherwise, you will stir hatred and jealousy that you don't need against yourself. Study your relationship with people to know your limit with them.

Dreams are realities that are yet to be. It gives you the picture of the future. The realization of your dream depends on how you go about it and the people you bring into it. Be wise!

Joseph was yet to realize that his dream was a revelation of his future. Therefore, God gave him the dream again in another version to make him pay attention to the dream. But his attitude remained naive as ever. The Bible says:

9 Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me."

10 So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?"

*11 And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind. **Genesis 37:9-11***

There is only one primary reason for you to share your dream with anyone. It is to seek clarity and guidance but that is only necessary when you are yet to understand your dream. However, you can only do this with a mentor or motivator.

On a secondary level, you share your dream to attract support. This is necessary because you cannot fulfil your dream alone. It does not also mean you need everybody to fulfil your dream. You must understand your dream so well to know those who can fit into it.

Whoever you share your dream with, you also bring into your dream and the realization of your dream also depends on those you bring into it. They will either come in to play a positive role or a negative role.

Joseph brought his brothers into his dream and they only played a negative role in it. Their negative disposition towards Joseph only grew worse. First it was hatred and later, it became envy and out of envy they sold him into slavery. Envy is worse than hatred but hatred leads to envy. When hatred turns to envy, it becomes uncontrollable.

Your dream is first for you before others. Therefore, when you have a dream, always start with yourself before you begin to share it with anyone. This helps you to understand your dream very well and who you can bring into it.

Finally, Joseph's dream is an indication that, your future is not determined by your relationship with people and their attitude towards you but it depends on the plan and purpose of God for you. In spite of the hatred of his brothers, God still gave Joseph a dream of his future.

Besides, Joseph did not fulfil his dream with his brothers but saw his dream come true with strangers. Let your relationship with God be more important to you than your relationship with men. As you go through life, desire to see your dream come to reality and pray earnestly for grace to always approach your dream with the right attitude in Jesus Christ's name. Amen

KEYS TO A SECURED FUTURE

MC Elizabeth O. Olujinmi

Every one of us desires a glorious future, when our dreams and aspirations are fulfilled. We want a future that is full of love, joy and fulfillment of our expectations. And somewhere at the corner of every heart is the fear of how tomorrow will look like: in our family life, career, health, relationships, etc.

Having a great future that is secured and defended against the devil's assaults don't just happen; it has a lot to do with how we live our lives in the present and the decisions we make.

The following nuggets will help us to prepare for a future that is secured in God:

1. FOLLOW GOD'S INSTRUCTIONS: God, the Creator of heaven and earth and all that is in them, is the only wise God, excellent in His ways and perfect in His doings. He set an order for all human being to follow as we go through life. This order is revealed in His activities in the creation of man at the beginning, "the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And the man became a living being.... The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it... the Lord God said. "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper for him." (Gen. 2: 7, 15, 18 NIV).

The order according to the above quoted scripture is very clear.

At the beginning of life, while you are planning and preparing for the future, you must first choose who to live for. At creation, God first established a relationship between Himself and the man He created. He released a portion of Himself into man (breathed into his nostrils the breath of life}. This act is the reason why every human being is conscious of the existence of a Supreme Being that cannot be seen with our physical eyes but we can feel Him in and around us.

You must first of all choose the invisible being you want to live for. Either God, your maker, who has chosen to reveal Himself to us through His Son, Jesus Christ. Or the devil, man's archenemy, and the wicked task master that seeks to lure man into bondage and make his life void of meaning. The choice is yours.

The second of this order is that you must choose what to live for. The Lord God gave the man He created his work... put him in the garden to tend and care for it. The first man had work from the onset. There are different things that are contending for our attention in life. Some are of good value while some are of little or no value, especially eternal or lasting value. Every one of us must choose the thing that will take the greater part of our attention, effort, resources and time. The Lord God gave man his assignment – his work. The Holy Scripture says that work has been prepared long ago before we were born. “For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” Ephesians 2:10 (NLT).

Know the reason you are alive today, the reason you go through all the stages of growth and experiences, and have your type of temperament, etc. Discover yourself and your assignment. Your assignment can only be discovered from your Creator, He is your Source, He is the Author of your life, and you are a masterpiece of His craftsmanship. He has the copyright of your life, He is the one that fashioned you into who you are and how you are. Your gifts, talents, the place of your birth and the people you came through are all His personal designs. Acts 17: 26,28 *“...And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed time and the boundaries of their dwellings...for in Him we live and move and have our being... For we are also His offsprings.”*

The reasons He sent you into this world at this time is hidden in His heart, seek Him in prayer and His word, find out while you are here. Give good attention to your gifts and talent, use them for His glory and do not forsake the passion of your heart.

Your glory lies in discovering your assignment. “It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, to search out a matter is the glory of kings.” Proverbs 25: 2 (NIV)

The third of the order will easily fall in line and simple to discover if the first two are properly in place. And it is that, you must choose who to live with. Deciding on who to live with is a major challenge to many young people today because the order God laid down is not followed. So many people are only concerned about how to make money, not about the assignment, the purpose. If you do not know yourself and your assignment, it will be difficult to know who can really complement you well in the future and for you to know yourself, you must know your God – your Source.

The choice of whom to live with must be made with sincerity of heart, genuineness of purpose and willingness to submit to your Creator. You are not fashioned to be able to live with just anybody. Physical appearance is not what determined the choice of who you can live with but the inner package that only the Source knows in details. The Creator

made us for different purposes and so are the people that can support us to achieve such purpose in life. He is the only One who can favour His son with a wife of noble character and beautify His daughter with a faithful man.

“A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies... Many a man claim to have unfailing love, but a faithful man who can find?” (Proverbs 31: 10; 20: 6)

2. LIVE A RESPONSIBLE LIFE TODAY: *“For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.” (2 Corinthians 1: 20 NIV).*

The promises of God are true. He can do all that He has spoken in His word. He is in charge of all things today, tomorrow and forever. As the redeemed of the Lord, your lifestyle, words and attitude must say the “Amen” (so shall it be). Our daily lives must agree with our expectations. If truly you trust God’s power and willingness to bring His promises to pass in your life both now and in future, then you cannot live contrary to God’s promises and instructions in His words. Live like someone expecting the fulfillment of those promises. He promised us peace, joy, secured future, etc. then live with the awareness that there is a connection between your today and the future; the two are connected. This consciousness will bring glory to God and your faith will make a great difference in your generation.

You must bear in mind that your life is a seed; your words, deeds and thoughts are all seeds that will bear fruit in the future. *“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature will from that nature reap destruction; the one who sows to please the spirit will reap eternal life.” (Galatians 6: 7-8).*

You will not want to spend your earnings on sickness in the future, then refrain from habits that can threaten your health in the future. You desire a good family relationship in the future, don’t be the reason why someone’s home will break up or have stress. You want to excel in your career, then work to build a foundation that can sustain your expectation. You will not want to be a parent of a child that does not belong to any home; having a father that is on the lap of another woman, a mother in the arm of another man, so don’t toy with falling in love, it is a life matter. All manners of pain, agony of life and psychological stress can result from being care free about your relationship with the opposite gender today when it seems you are free and belong to no one. You actually belong to someone and you will do yourself good to keep yourself for him or her.

Above all, remember you belong to God. *“You were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.” (1 Corinthians 6: 20).* You will give account of your life to Him one day. *“Be a happy young man while you are young and let your heart give you joy in the days of your youth.*

Follow the ways of your heart and whatever your eyes see, but know that for all these things God will bring you to judgment.” (Ecclesiastes 11:9 NIV).

To build a strong foundation for your future, you need to build your spirit man to be strong through the word of God. A man with the strong spirit is the man that can withstand the storms of life even when it is vehement. *“I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and put them into practice. He is like a man building a house who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When the flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built...” (Luke 6: 47-48 NIV).*

Storms are part of life, they will surely come. Sometimes it may be vehement but a life that is built on the foundation of the word of God will stand secure because the Word is the eternal Rock. He sustains, keeps and preserves. Let the word of Christ dwell in your heart richly. Study it, believe it and practice it.

3. RECOGNISE THE PLACE OF GOD’S MERCY:

“It is because of the Lord’s mercy, and loving-kindness that we are not consumed, because his (tender) compassions fails not. They are new every morning: great and abundant is your stability and faithfulness.” (Lamentation 3:22-23 Amplified).

“The horse is made ready for the day of battle but victory rests with the Lord.” (Proverbs 21:31 (NIV)).

It is the mercy of God that brought you forth at birth, you are living today by His mercy and your future is secured by His mercy. Do not despise the mercy of God in your life and activities. The mercy of God is so strong that it can turn negative situations around, bring a message out of the mess and victor out of victim. When there is the need to genuinely repent of wrong doings, be humble enough to do so and plead for His mercy. He will generously pardon and restore all that was lost. Trust in His compassion and don’t be in bondage to guilt and fear. Through Jesus Christ, our Saviour, we can sing a new song. The Lord Jesus is the Sun and Shield, He gives grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from him that walk uprightly.

- He is strong enough to give you victory over every challenge you will face.
- He is wise enough to teach you the easy road to lasting good success and fulfillment.

- He cares enough to guide and guard you in your journey in life.

Don't despise His words, they are the right counsel; the light that will lighten your darkness, the oil that will grease your path and make your journey smooth.

NEVER FORGET THIS

YOU are important – to God, your parents, your siblings, your friends, your generation and your world. Your happiness will make many people happy, your fulfillment will lead to so many other people's fulfillment. For God to choose to form you in His image, sent His only begotten Son to die for you, release His Spirit to guide and guard you through life. You are very important, don't live your life anyhow.

COMMITMENT, AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT TO SUCCESS

MC Rev. Olufunso Ajibode

Commitment can be defined as a promise made to take serious actions. Commitment will ensure that you are successful in your chosen career, endeavor or task. Commitment is about doing something even when you don't feel like doing it. It is the courage to go through unknown or unfamiliar path. It helps you in taking calculated risks. It keeps you going through all the tough and rough times that you may unavoidably be faced with in your journey. Commitment enables you to move from the known to the unknown.

COMMITMENT AND CHOICES

Choice making is an important part of our daily living. We all make choices on a daily basis. Choice, once made, demands and deserves your commitment. You may not always follow someone else's vision or goals. You need to identify your God-given purpose in life and then develop action steps towards achieving those courses of actions. Without definite and clear-cut choices, commitment may be difficult. You get committed to your choices. When you choose to do anything of your own accord, your level of commitment is far higher than if it were to be forced on you.

COMMITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Commitment is a key to untap and increase your potential. With commitment, you develop daily. When you venture into the unknown and commit to your task or endeavor, you are setting yourself on the path to learn, grow and develop. Commitment is about developing the courage to go through the unknown. When you go through the unknown, you learn. When you learn, you develop capacities and capabilities. These then translate into confidence which leads to more commitment. Then, more capacities and capabilities yield more confidence. All these ultimately culminate into growth and development for you and your endeavor. Therefore, the more you are able to complete these cycle, the more the success you are able to achieve in life.

STRONG COMMITMENT

The stronger your commitment, the more you are likely to succeed as you refuse to give up. When you are not fully committed to a course, you give up too quickly. You will be less determined and you are prone to procrastinate and make unproductive decisions. A lack of commitment, therefore, is the most common reason why people fail to succeed and achieve set goals.

DEVELOPING STRONG COMMITMENT

Strong commitment does not just fall from the sky, you develop it over time. One major way to strengthen your commitment to your goals is by identifying the REASON(S) you need to succeed.

1. When you succeed in your set goals, it will bring a lot of IMPROVEMENTS to your life and give you self-fulfillment. On the other hand, your life could be worse if you are not able to achieve your goals and become successful.

2. Knowing and understanding the reason(s) you want to succeed also serves as ANCHOR for you when you are faced with challenges and obstacles. The reason becomes your source of motivation when times get tough and rough, even when you don't feel like doing the task. Your reason is what keeps you going when you think of giving up.

If, however, you are not able to identify your reason(s), you are likely to be much less committed. When you are not committed, you are not likely to succeed. You will give in to instant gratification more easily, get easily distracted, dwell in your comfort zone and give up too quickly.

You would not be willing to invest the same amount of time and energy into achieving your goals compared to someone who have and knows the reason why he/she wants to succeed in his/her task/endeavours and is fully committed to them.

When you are clear on your reason(s) and fully aware of all the ways that achieving your task/endeavor will transform your life, then you will be committed to achieving it. In that case, you are able to do the task despite not feeling like. You will work on your goals rather than sleep. You will defy cold and rain. You will also break old destructive patterns for your goals to be achieved. You will push through any obstacles that comes on your way.

CONCLUSION

The stronger your commitment, the more likely you will succeed as you refuse to give up or give in. You will then make more disciplined and productive decisions. And you are more willing to go out of your comfort zone. If you want to succeed in life, you need to be fully committed and identifying your reason(s) is one of the most effective ways to develop a strong commitment to your tasks and endeavours.

CHANGE YOUR ENVIRONMENT

MC Rev. Olufunso Ajibode

One of the best things you can do for yourself is to get yourself into an environment where growth is sacrosanct. Environment has great influence on your thoughts, actions and the quality of life that you live. Avoid a gathering of people who are comfortable being average, unless that is the life you want for yourself. Avoid the gathering of people who just want to get by.

Get yourself into an environment that will lift up your spirit, and not dampen your morale. Surround yourself with people who constantly seek growth, work towards it and actively explore ways to have a better life. You must surround yourself with people who will constantly motivate you and challenge your limits.

Sometimes, limits are self-imposed. You must learn to challenge yourself and go beyond the limits you have imposed on your mind. Go to where there is support. Supports such as moral, financial, educational, spiritual, e.t.c. Make it your goal to hang around where you gain more than you lose. Get closer to people that work hard, get results from their work, and love enjoyment. You must understand that you are not in life to suffer.

If your current environment and the people you have around you do not fit into the vision of the future you desire, you then need to excuse yourself from them. You need to get into a new circle that supports growth and provides you with the right platform and resources to achieve your ambitions. Some of your old friends will get angry, call you arrogant, over-ambitious, e.t.c. Whatever they call you should not bother you. Understand that this has to do with your vision and future, you cannot afford to be a mediocre.

FAMILY CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION

MC Glory F. Nkuda

Conflict can happen when family members have different views or beliefs that clash. Peaceful resolution depends on negotiation and respect for the other person's point of view.

Sometimes, conflict can occur when people misunderstand each other and jump to the wrong conclusion. Issues of conflict that are resolved peacefully can lead to arguments and resentment.

Let us learn to be abased and to abound

It is normal to disagree with each other from time to time because we are humans. But remember that conflicts can be stressful and damaging to relationships whether long term or short-term relationships.

In this unreasonable economy and anachronistic /chaotic society that we are in now, some people find it difficult to manage their feelings and become intentionally hurtful (especially in trivial matters), aggressive or even violent.

How can we reduce this conflict? It is by communicating in a positive way so that family members can reach a peaceful resolution. This usually means that everyone agrees to a compromise or agrees to disagree.

Common causes of Family conflict

It is well recognized that some of the stages a family goes through can cause conflict. These may include

- Learning to live as a new couple
- Birth of a baby
- Birth of other children
- A child going to school
- A child becoming a young person
- A young person becoming an adult
- Communication disorder

- Egocentricity
- Dissatisfaction
- Third party disturbances
- Psychological disturbances

Each of these stages can create new and different stresses and potential conflict

Changes in the family situation can also take a toll on the family and contribute to conflict. This may include events such as:

- Separation or divorce
- Moving to a new house or country
- Travelling long distances to work
- Commuting interstate for work
- Change in financial circumstances

Remember that the opinion, values and needs of each parent can also change and they may find they are no longer compatible.

Agreeing to negotiate

Usually, our first angry impulse is to push the point that we are right and win the argument at any cost. Suggestions to aid negotiation include

- Work out if the issue is worth fighting over
- Try to separate the problem from the person
- Try to cool off first if you feel too angry to talk calmly
- Keep in mind that the idea is to resolve the conflict, not win the argument
- Remember that the other party isn't obliged to always agree with you on everything
- Talk clearly and reasonably
- Agree to disagree

Try to listen

Conflict can escalate when the people involved are too angry to listen to each other. Misunderstandings fuel arguments. Suggestions to aid listening include

- Try to stay calm
- Try to put emotions aside

- Don't interrupt the other person while they are speaking
- Check that you understand them by asking questions
- Resist the urge to bring up other unresolved but unrelated issues

Work as a team

Once both parties understand the views and feelings of the other, you can work out a solution together. Suggestions include

- Come up with as many possible solutions as you can
- Be willing to compromise
- Make sure everyone clearly understands the chosen solution
- Once the solution is decided on, stick to it
- Write it down as a 'contract', of necessary

How can we solve the problems of broken family relationships?

Family Therapist tips include

- Let go of your anger: Holding onto Anger and grudges robs you of your inner peace
- Set Realistic Expectations
- Take it slowly
- Decide if you need to get closure from the past
- Seek professional Help

Biblical advice on Family conflict

Matthew 28:15 advises, *"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you"*.

This verse underscores the importance of addressing conflicts privately and with a spirit of reconciliation

Mark 11:25 *"And when ye stand praying, forgive, of ye have ought against any, that your father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses"*.

A life of continuous prayer and forgiveness is a major key for dealing with conflict in the family. Prayer and forgiveness are therapeutic because it helps to heal.

Professional advice

There are services available to help family members work through difficult issues of conflict. Seek professional advice /counseling, if you think you need some assistance.

References

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MENTORING

MC Prof. Olufunke Ola-Davies

Definition: A mentor is someone who uses their experience to guide and help you grow your career. They offer their advice and expertise to help you make decisions, overcome challenges, and progress in your career



Why Having a Mentor Is Important for Growth?

The days of getting a degree and working in one field into retirement are long gone. While there's no clear consensus as to the number, recent reports suggest that people now change careers several times throughout their professional lives. Such a shift requires working people to constantly develop new skills and pursue new opportunities. Having a mentor can help you gain the skills and connections you need to continue on your career journey.

Having a mentor can mean the difference between advancement and stagnation. Having a mentor means:

- You gain access to industry insights and expertise from someone in a later stage of their career
- You have someone to help channel your ambition into actionable steps

- You get someone to help you market yourself by building a strong resume or a personal brand

These benefits alone would be enough to make a mentor relationship worthwhile, but they barely touch on what's possible. Your mentor can give you unique guidance through the job search period and beyond.

Types Of Mentoring

There are three types of mentoring.

1. Traditional One-on-one Mentoring.

A mentee and mentor are matched, either through a program or on their own.

2. Distance Mentoring.

A mentoring relationship in which the two parties (or group) are in different locations.

3. Group Mentoring.

A single mentor is matched with a cohort of mentees.

What are the benefits of having a mentor?

- Being encouraged and empowered in personal development.
- Being helped to identify and achieve career goals.
- Being helped to identify and correct gaps in generic skills and knowledge.
- Increasing your confidence

How To Find and Choose a Mentor

Your mentor is likely to be in one of three groups of people:

Those you know,

Those in your network, or

Those you connect with through a career mentorship program.

Think of a few people you trust from each group and make a list of them.

The qualities you should look for in a good mentor are about the same no matter where you find them. That's good news because you can use a few simple criteria to help you narrow down your list of potential mentors.

Look for:

- Someone who can give constructive feedback
- Someone who doesn't judge you for asking questions
- Someone who is further along your chosen career path than you are

A mentor with all three of these traits is well-positioned to help you reach your career goals.

How To Benefit from a Mentor Relationship:

Having an idea of what you need will help you benefit the most from a mentor relationship.

Here are a few of the greatest benefits that you can expect to find:

- **Resources:** A good mentor will often have a robust professional network that they can leverage to help you advance quicker
- **Accountability:** For a lot of people, having someone to hold them accountable makes all the difference in achieving their short-term goals
- **Guidance:** When you're dealing with a potential setback, a mentor will act as a sounding board and offer advice that keeps you on track

Of course, you'll have to do your part to gain these benefits.

If you've found a good mentor, you should be honest with them about what you're dealing with so that they can offer the best possible advice. After that, be a coachable student by acting quickly on the guidance they give you.

How To Have a Successful Mentor Relationship

Reaping the benefits of learning with a mentor depends on your ability to treat the relationship properly. Here are a few tips to help put you on the right track:

- Respect the time commitment it takes to help you by taking advice seriously

- Maintain a long-term relationship by showing your enthusiasm for what you're learning
- Look out for ways that you can help your mentor achieve their goals
- Share your wins with your mentor when something they tell you is helpful

Your mentor is there to guide you and offer perspective with your best interests in mind, which means they're going to try to steer you away from potential pitfalls. They'll offer feedback that will help you hone in on your strengths and shore up your weaknesses.

This may be uncomfortable at times, so remember that a good mentor will never tell you anything without purpose.

Ideas for Finding a Mentor:

- Look within your company: Reach out to a senior colleague or supervisor who works in your desired field to start a relationship.
- Attend meetups: Going to local events for people who do the work that interests you is a great way to meet someone who could become a mentor.
- Join professional networks: Groups of professionals, whether online or physically, can help you connect to the right people.
- Find a mentoring program: Work with an organization that exists to connect young professionals to people with more experience.

These are all different approaches, but what they have in common is that they give you the opportunity to meet people, ask questions, and develop relationships that could eventually develop into mentorships

The Benefits of Mentoring on Career Development

Successful career development requires much more than technical and job-related skills. Typically, crafting a successful career requires effective communication and other soft skills, professional relationships and networks, and a career vision.

Many professionals fail to move up the career ladder even while excelling at their jobs because they lack some of these important competencies. However, a mentor can help professionals develop some of these extra-role skills and build key relationships; being a part of a mentoring relationship can be transformational for early career professionals.

Mentoring is a longer-term relationship lasting at least 9 months, typically between more experienced professionals and their mentees. The main purpose of a mentoring relationship is the continual development of the mentee, although there are other benefits.

The mentor acts as a trusted advisor to the mentee, and supports them in developing new skills, navigating political environments, challenging ideas, and encouraging career development. Most professionals who make it to the executive level cite mentoring as an important contributor to their career success.

Mentors contribute to their mentees' career development in a number of important ways.

Here are six key benefits of mentoring on career development

1. A mentor can be helpful in developing communication skills.

Mentors can act as role models for desired behaviors, which often includes communication skills.

Interaction between the mentor and mentee gives the mentee an opportunity to observe the mentor and adapt some of the effective behaviors. Mentors can also give valuable feedback to mentees on their communication style and effectiveness

2. Mentors can help mentees overcome obstacles in their careers.

This is one of the most wonderful benefits of mentoring for the mentees. By discussing problems with their mentors, mentees can problem-solve and work through career issues, whether they are immediate, operational issues, or longer-term problems.

Mentees can tap into the experience of mentors, rather than learning things "the hard way" through trial and error. Mentors can also help mentees avoid problems in the first place by providing advice.

At times, a mentor can even step in and provide tangible support for their mentees, by sponsoring them or recruiting them for new positions. When a mentor sponsors a mentee, they actively advocate for them and their career.

3. Mentors can help their mentees identify developmental objectives.

Often, early career professionals can lack self-awareness, and not have a good understanding of their professional strengths and weaknesses. Mentors can also be

helpful in identifying critical skills for potential future roles for the mentee. Mentors can help uncover these professional blind spots, which can help professionals target their developmental efforts

4. The benefits of mentoring also include growing mentees' professional network.

Mentors typically have the benefit of more work and leadership experience, which often equates to a wider and deeper network.

Mentors can help new mentees broaden their own network by making introductions and connecting mentees with other individuals who can help the mentee advance in their careers. For example, a mentor can introduce the mentee to their organizational peers. The mentee benefits by getting exposure to higher-ups in the organization that normally would not interact with the mentee.

5. One of the key benefits of mentoring is to develop and refine mentees' leadership philosophy.

As a professional matures, they will need to figure out what kind of leader they will be, and be prepared to face tough ethical choices.

Often, this is done through many situations, large and small, that test the professional's boundaries. The mentor can act as a sounding board to the mentee, to help them work through ethical dilemmas and other tough situations.

One role of an effective mentor is that of a good listener. While not imposing their own values on the mentee, they can make suggestions, help the mentee think through choices, and ask questions to challenge the mentee's thinking.

For example, the mentor may help the mentee work through a moral challenge. In this way, the mentor can be instrumental in developing the character of the mentee.

6. Lastly, mentors help young professionals develop a broader perspective.

Often, mentors are higher than their mentees, from their organizational vantage point, they "see" much more than their mentees relatively narrow view.

By sharing their perspective, they can help mentees broaden their own perspective, and understand the point of view of different functional or regional areas. Further, mentors can tap into their experience when helping their mentees discuss choices and dilemmas by thinking through the impact of potential actions.

For a professional who wants to advance in their career, developing a meaningful mentoring relationship can be key. While improving technical and job skills is also important, it's not enough to prepare professionals for an executive role. The benefits of mentoring are worth the investment for career development.

In Conclusion,

Pls note that this discussion is not exhaustive and that mentorship could be employed in different aspects or areas of life as we deem fit. I therefore encourage all to get a mentor TODAY. THE VIEW IS SWEETER AT THE TOP. SEE YOU THERE BY GOD'S GRACE. Thank you all for the audience. God bless you

DISCIPLINE WITH EMPHASIS ON SELF DISCIPLINE

MC Rebecca Jacobs

According to COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary, discipline is the quality of being able to behave and work in a controlled way which involves obeying particular rules or standards.

Self-discipline, however, is the act of disciplining or power to discipline one's own feelings, desires, etc, especially with the intention of improving oneself.

Self-discipline is being able to deprive oneself of instant pleasure, that is to delay gratification. It may be in the area of sex, food, money or achieving set goals and targets.

You will hardly find anyone who lacks self-discipline achieving greatness in life. This is because greatness entails more than mere wishes. There are sacrifices involved, lots of painful experiences (in most cases) that will end up refining and rebirthing a new individual, and ultimately result in greatness.

Disciplined people don't allow their feelings or mood per time to rule them. They do what has to be done. Self-discipline helps you to be in control of yourself. It gives you a deeper feeling of motivation towards achieving your set goals.

Some qualities of an individual with self-discipline

* **They are time conscious.** They don't waste precious time. They are quite aware that time is more valuable than money. Infact, time is life! As a result, they treat time as such, knowing fully well that life can only be lived forward. And especially because we have very limited time to ourselves here on earth.

* **They set boundaries.** Knowing your limitations will help you lead a disciplined life. Say NO to things that don't align with your values, or that are distractions.

* **They set clear goals and make sure they achieve them.** There is a school of thought that says "If you can't fly, run. If you can't run, walk; if you can't walk, crawl. By all means, keep moving." In trying to achieve set goals, make sure they are clear and simple, not vague or ambiguous. Little achievements are to be celebrated.

* **Routine.** When it comes to efficiency and time management, having a routine is the way to go. It could be to run every day before checking up on your emails or messages. Or observing your quiet time (or meditation time) before turning on your phones and electronic devices. Turning off your phones and electronic devices before bed (also going to bed on time) is also a good example of self-discipline.

* **They don't allow their feelings or mood to rule them.** You may not feel like going to the gym, or exercising at all. Focusing on what needs to be done will make you do it, rather than going with your feelings.

* **They take care of themselves.** Activities like having a good nutrition, good sleeping habits and exercise are high on their to-do list. They know fully well the impacts these have on their mental and general well-being, such as mood, work performance and relationships.

I will like to add that self-discipline restrains one from talking carelessly. A saying goes that "he who has control over his mouth has control over his life." "*For by thy words thou shalt be justified; and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.*" Matthew 12:34

In conclusion, Joseph in the Bible was a perfect example of a man with self-discipline. Although his mouth landed him in trouble with his brothers when he told them his dreams which were too much for them to handle, when he found himself far away from home, with no parents or guidance, and as a full-fledged young man with blood flowing in his veins, he was able to put his feelings to check. When seduced by his master's wife to lay with her, he understood boundaries. He said "NO" to what lots of young men, if found in his situation, would have embraced, and seen as enjoyment.

In the case of Joseph, self-discipline helped him to preserve, not only his destiny, but that of his entire generation.

Contrary to the life of Joseph, Samson lived a life void of self-discipline. At the end, he could not fulfill the great destiny that was prophesied about him before his birth.

As strong and powerfully gifted as he was, lack of self-discipline resulted to his untimely death. (He died with his enemies.)

If you are in need of counseling, kindly contact the Wellness and Health Department.

WHERE IS YOUR GRIT?

MC Prof. Valentina Okeigbemen

Introduction

As time evolves, it is becoming clear that success in life has various contributing components. One of such is the need to have grit. It has been observed in studies among students when evaluated in their first year as to the likelihood of them completing their studies, that those who have grit were more likely to complete their studies compared to those who did not have grit. This can be extrapolated to people who start a project, a business endeavor, who are given assignments or tasks to complete. Those who have grit are more likely to complete the task compared to those who do not have grit.

What is grit?

It is the ability to persist in something you feel passionate about. It is the staying spirit that keeps you focused on accomplishing set goals, both short and long term goals. According to Angela Duckworth, the psychologist, who introduced us to this term, grit is “passion and perseverance for long-term and meaningful goals”. This kind of passion has direction and commitment. It entails keeping at a task no matter how boring or difficult it is. To persevere means to stick with a task and continue working hard even after experiencing failure or difficulty.

How important is grit?

Its importance cannot be overemphasized. Studies have shown that the ability to be gritty is a necessary part of success, independent of talent or education. This is because grit drives achievement and success. When you develop grit in your work as an affiliate of Write-for-Me Academy, you will be motivated and driven to actualizing the vision of overcoming poverty, oppression, suppression and gas lighting in the war against POSG (WAPOS-G).

How does grit differ from commitment?

As we have seen, grit has to do with the ability to stick to a task, no matter how difficult it is, in order to see it through while commitment is the decision to stick to the task.

According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, commitment is an agreement or a pledge to do something in the future.

Building grit

1. Develop passion for your task

To build grit, you must develop a passion for what you are doing. Passion is that intense feeling or emotion one possesses towards an assignment or task, which gives you boundless energy and the will power to overcome no matter the obstacle faced in the course of executing that assignment or task. Passion gives you the reason to keep learning and to work towards mastery. Having passion or an intense liking for your task will help you develop grit.

2. Clarify your goals

You need to be crystal clear about your ultimate goal and most of your smaller goals should align with that goal. Duckworth suggests Warren Buffet's three-step process to bring your goals together:

- a. Write down a list of 25 career goals.
- b. Circle the five highest priority goals by doing a soul search.
- c. See how the remaining 20 goals can help support your highest five goals. If they do not support, avoid them as distracters.

3. Discover your interests

Interest is the source of passion. You are more satisfied when you are doing a task that fits your personal interest. Ask yourself these questions: What do you like to think about? What do you really care about? What matters most to you? Take time to discover your interests

4. Practice deliberately

Spend a lot of time on your tasks. To practice deliberately means your practice is characterized by a clearly defined goal, full concentration and effort, immediate and informative feedback as well as repetition with reflection and refinement

5. Know your purpose

Purpose is the reason behind why you do things. Whatever your passion is, ask yourself how it connects to the bigger picture, and how it is an expression of your deepest values. How will it contribute to the well-being of others? Knowing your purpose will keep you going.

6. Have a growth mindset

Henry Ford wrote, “Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t-you are right”. Many things we do depends on our mindset. Mindset is an established set of mental attitudes or inclination especially as regarding one’s outlook, philosophy, or values. A growth mindset is encouraged compared to a fixed mindset. In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work. This view, according to Dweck, creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.

Learn to pay attention to your self-talk. Speak positive words to yourself. This encourages a growth mindset.

7. Join a gritty culture

The culture we live in and identify with powerfully shapes who we are. When we want to build grit, we need to stay in the midst of those who are like minded. This creates an enabling environment for growth. Ogapatapata and the Write-for-Me Academy has created an enabling environment for growth on the affiliate platform. We need to take advantage of this and key into the vision of victory over poverty, oppression, suppression and gas lighting (WAPOS-G) through the various activities on the platform.

In conclusion

This is a call for us to overcome obstacles we are faced with in life by developing grit. Looking at the ways of building grit, which one appeals to you? Pick it and begin to implement it in your life. As you do so, if you have questions or challenges pertaining to accomplishing your dream and purpose, well versed professionals are available to assist.

If you are in need of counselling, kindly contact the Wellness and Health Department.

Excerpts from Grit: the power of passion and perseverance by Angela Duckworth

INSOMNIA AND SLEEP HYGIENE

MC Dr Onyinye Onyedi

What comes to your mind when you hear or see the word 'sleep'? Do you think about Rest? Peace? Or do you find yourself feeling Anxious? Troubled?

Do you know that having a good sleep is very important for your mental health? I'm sure you know that. It may not surprise you to know that a good number of adults do not sleep well. What may surprise you, however, is that there's something called 'Sleep Hygiene'.

What surprises me, though, is how Lagos residents get any sleep at all!

Sleep is a basic need of man. There is no substitute for it. You cannot cheat sleep. And you should not.

Poor sleep has serious health consequences. In this article, we'll briefly enumerate these conditions that can result from inadequate sleep. We would then go ahead to discuss the dos and don'ts of sleep hygiene.

So, let's dive in....

First of all, what is the definition of poor sleep? How do you know if you're having adequate sleep? When can you say that you have Insomnia?

Insomnia is defined as repeated difficulty with sleep initiation, maintenance, consolidation, or quality that occurs despite adequate time and opportunity for sleep and that results in some form of daytime impairment.

Specific criteria include:

- a) Taking longer than 30 minutes to fall asleep
- b) Staying asleep for less than 6 hours
- c) Waking more than 3 times a night
- d) Experiencing sleep that is chronically nonrestorative or poor in quality.

Please, note that Insomnia is a medical diagnosis and not a term to be used casually anytime one has difficulty sleeping.

Next, let's look at some of the causes of Insomnia:

- A. Minor (Self-limiting) causes – Travel, stress, shift work, small children
- B. Psychological causes – Depression, Anxiety, Grief, Alcoholism
- C. Physical causes – Drugs, pain, itching, sweats (e.g. menopause), frequent night urination, asthma

Next, what are the possible negative consequences of poor sleep?

For the sake of time/space, I'll just enumerate some of them:

1. Poor concentration
2. Poor memory
3. Inefficiency in performing daytime tasks
4. Risk of accidents
5. Weight gain
6. Hypertension
7. Diabetes

Now, to the meat of the matter. What can you do about poor sleep? The simple answer is practice good Sleep Hygiene.

Principles of Sleep Hygiene

1. Don't go to bed until you feel sleepy
2. Don't stay in bed if you're not asleep
3. Avoid daytime naps
4. Establish a regular bedtime routine
5. Reserve a room for sleep only (if possible). Do not eat, read, work, or watch TV in it.
6. Make sure the bedroom and bed are comfortable, and avoid extremes of noise and temperature

7. Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and nicotine
8. Have a warm bath and warm milky drink at bedtime
9. Do regular exercise, but avoid late night hard exercise
10. Rise at the same time every morning regardless of how long you've slept

There are usually a lot of issues dragging for our attention. However, we must learn to unwind and enjoy a good night sleep in the midst of all that life brings our way.

However, if you have done all we discussed here and the poor sleep continues, please consult your doctor. There are medical treatments available for insomnia.

If you are in need of counseling, kindly contact the Wellness and Health Department.

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

MC Phunmie Miah-Ojiodu

Where would you stand if I move the motion that "Introverts have better chances in life than extroverts vs Extrovert have better chances in life than introverts?"

Some psychologists have grouped personalities of individuals under these two categories and yet we are said to have an amount of both but one is more dominant in individuals.

Whichever you support, the question to explore is WHAT MAKES THEM DIFFERENT?

It is the extent of the ability someone possesses or the willingness to learn the act of internalizing or externalizing; it is the posture you take in relating with your environment.

A sentence contraction of that answer, will read, SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Social is defined as relational skill. While intelligence is defined as the ability to comprehend and use knowledge acquired.

Whether you are an introvert or extrovert, you can close the gap difference of social intelligence by relational exposure, which is determined by your intake ability and output ability.

Intake ability is your listening and reading skill. The more you carefully listen to other people gives you an understanding of how to relate with them. Do you often hear in an argument, someone says 'you're not listening to me' that is because something beyond words is being communicated that the other person is not paying attention to. It's sometimes in the tone, expression, body language or even in silence. Intake ability demands that you read between the lines.

Steps to exercising your Intake Ability:

1. Ask open-ended questions- what inform that? How will that play out? Where will that take us?
2. Respect people's opinions- you don't always have to take the show. Give people an opportunity to play out their opinion.

3. Be genuinely interested in the success of people- it makes you, gentle, reasonable, honest and open to their thoughts without bias and that in itself make people feel comfortable around you

Output Ability which is your speaking and writing skills is fueled by the information that resides inside you. You can't give what you don't have. The much social food you feed yourself, the much intelligence you will exhibit. Imbibe social manners like greetings, staying on the queue, apologizing, appreciating, asking for permission and the likes. Output ability demands that you're courteous.

Steps to exercising your Output Ability:

1. Socialize with people- you can start with a smile and a radiant expression; you may initiate a rapport with a good topic. However, initiating a rapport requires you do so with the second point in mind.

2. Recognize the atmosphere- you don't want to speak off point where a totally different conversation is going on, or look silly in an atmosphere that is calm by acting overly excited, or damp the excitement around a place by being oblivious of present situation. This brings us to the third point.

3. Internalize before you externalize- in other words, think before you talk. Process before you distribute. This will help you to express your originality and give impactful contribution. Having said that, note that reading this article is not an automatic license of having completed a social intelligence training; you must become your own trainer. Speak to yourself! Use phrases like

- * Stop it! That is an instruction- Heed!
- * What are you doing? It's a question- Answer!
- * How did I get here- That's a map guide- Trace!
- * I will... (go, do, etc) it's a self-call- Decide!
- * What's the koko(goal)? It's the big picture- Snap!

In conclusion, what are the Fruits of Social Intelligence?

- It nurtures relationship management skills.
- It reflects effective listening and speaking.
- It fosters leadership potential.
- It improves self-worth and respect for others.
- It sharpens intuitiveness and empathability.

With these few words of mine, I move the motion that, with social intelligence, introverts and extroverts have equal chances in life.

ANXIETY DISORDERS

MC Dr. Prisca Okechukwu

Anxiety is simply defined as a tense and persistent feeling of worry and fear about a situation.

Anxiety is not a disease condition. It can only be regarded as a disease condition when it has become prolonged/ chronic and it's affecting an individual's outcome or output in life performances. When someone is worried about situations surrounding his or her daily activities, they grow into anxiety and the person starts experiencing some anxiety symptoms.

Symptoms of Anxiety

- * Feeling nervous restlessness and tense.
- * Having a sense of impending danger panic or doom.
- * Having an increase heart rate.
- * Breathing rapidly.
- * Sweating.
- * Trembling.
- * Feeling weak and tired.
- * Having trouble concentrating or coordinating your thoughts.
- * Having trouble sleeping.
- * Experiencing gastro intestinal problems.
- * Difficulty in controlling worry.
- * Having the urge to avoid things that trigger anxiety.

Normal Anxiety Situations

- Speaking in Public
- Taking an academic examination

- Going for medical examination
- Attending a job interview
- Having a surprise/unplanned event. etc.

These situations are regarded as normal because their episodes are short lived.

TYPES OF ANXIETY DISORDERS

1. Agoraphobia

This is an anxiety disorder which prompts you to avoid places or situation that may predispose you to fear, panic, embarrassment or make you helpless. Places or situations you are probably not in control of and cannot predict the outcome.

2. Anxiety Disorder owing to Medical Condition

Some underlying medical conditions could trigger anxiety symptoms. For instance, heart disease, diabetes, thyroid problems such as hyperthyroidism, respiratory disorder such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, drug misuse or withdrawal, withdrawal from anxiety medication, chronic pain or irritable bowel syndrome. These conditions could lead to repeated episodes of fear or terror that peaks within minutes. The feelings of anxiety as a result of panic caused by medical conditions can interfere with daily activities and could be difficult to control, leading to anxiety disorder.

3. Generalized Anxiety Disorder

This has to do with excessive worry about activities and events including ordinary routine issues and our daily tasks. This type of worry, when out of proportion to the actual circumstance, becomes difficult to control and affect how we feel physically. Most often, this could occur together with depression. A good example could be seen in a depressed individual thinking how to overcome his or her daily responsibilities at work.

4. Panic Disorder

Panic disorder involves repeated episodes of sudden feeling of intense fear or terror that peaks within minutes. When someone is feeling an impending doom. This could result to shortness of breath, chest pain and heart palpitations these panic attacks may lead to worrying about a repeat situation and how to avoid such from re-occurring in future. Eg can be seen in an individual who has experienced a criminal invasion or kidnap episode.

5. Selective mutism

This is a situation where children consistently fail to speak out in certain situations. For instance, in school or even at home, when they can't speak with other children or close family members. This inability to express themselves could affect their academic performance and social functioning.

6. Separation Anxiety Disorder

This type of anxiety disorder is also related to children. It is characterized by the inability of the child to develop properly/accordingly as a result of separation from parents or others who have parental roles.

7. Social Phobia

This is an anxiety disorder which has to do with high levels of worry and fear. It is characterized by the avoidance of social gathering/activities due to feelings of embarrassment, self-consciousness and being judged or viewed negatively by others.

8. Specific Phobias

This is characterized by major feeling of fear when you are exposed to a particular object, person or situation and a desire to avoid such. Phobias predispose some people to panic attacks.

9. Substance Induced Anxiety Disorder

This is seen when someone have any of the symptoms of anxiety as a result of drug misuse, withdrawal of anxiety medication or being exposed to toxic substance. It can also be seen when taking medications. Some people panic and fear at the sight of medications even though it's doctor's prescription.

10. Other forms of Anxiety Disorders

These include all Anxiety or Phobias that are not classified but meet the criteria for anxiety disorder or are significant enough to cause disruption in performance outcome of an individual's life.

Anxiety is normally not a medical condition it can only be regarded as a disease condition where it has become long-lasting and interfering with one's daily activity. It can affect both men and women, children and adults. However, it tends to affect women more.

The experiences and coping style of men is different from that of women. While most men self-medicate on tobacco products and alcohol, majority of women seek emotional support. Mild anxiety has been linked to better cognitive performance while severe anxiety has been linked to lower quality performance which in turn results to low quality life and reduced social function.

When To Seek Medical Help

1. When you are worrying too much and it's interfering with your daily activities, relationship with others and your life generally.
2. When your fear, worry and panic is upsetting you and difficult to control.
3. When you feel depressed, having trouble with alcohol or drug use and you have mental health concerns along with anxiety.
4. When you feel your anxiety could be related to health conditions like diabetes, asthma
5. When you have suicidal thoughts and/ behaviours.

Conclusion

It is important to seek help when having any form of anxiety disorder because your worries may not go away on their own and may even get worse over time if you don't seek help. It will also be easier to treat if reported earlier.

Are you prone to feelings of fear and panic?? Talk to someone today. Do not suffer in silence. A problem shared is a problem solved. Most importantly if you feel your anxiety disorder is chronic/long lasting, see your doctor as you're classified as a medical emergency.

If you are in need of Counselling, kindly contact the Wellness and Health Department.

COMPONENTS OF A QUALITY LIFE STYLE

MC Chukwu Stella

The term quality lifestyle/quality of life refers to the degree to which an individual is healthy, comfortable, and able to participate in or enjoy life events. The definition of quality of life is highly subjective for whereas one person may define quality of life according to wealth or satisfaction with life, another person may define it in terms of capabilities. A disabled person may report a high quality of life, whereas a healthy person who recently lost a job may report a low quality of life.

Quality of life can be assessed as the extent to which one have the choice to live the kind of life that they want.

Standard indicators of quality lifestyle include: wealth, employment, housing condition, the environment, physical & mental health, education, recreation & leisure time, social belonging, religious beliefs, safety, security and freedom

Standard of living versus quality of life

Standard of living refers to the level of wealth, comfort, material goods, and necessities available to a person or community whereas Quality of life, is a subjective term that can measure happiness and concerns the general wellbeing of individuals and societies.

In Nigeria today, both the standard of living and quality of living is at its low, necessitating that people need to assess and identify ways to improve their quality of life.

How Can You Assess Your Quality of Life and Improve Your Lifestyle Quality?

There are numerous ways to measure quality of life, reflecting the numerous ways people conceptualize what quality of life is. As Zig Ziglar said, "If standard of living is your number one objective, quality of life almost never improves. But if quality of life is your number one objective, standard of living invariably improves."

There's a statement that "money makes the world go round" mostly because availability of money makes it easier to improve quality of life. Yet, not everyone with money is

happy, we all get frustrated from time to time. Life can be overwhelming and the tough times can seem overbearing.

However, life doesn't have to overwhelm, and it most certainly doesn't have to frustrate. You can improve the quality of your life by making a few small adjustments to your routines by altering your behavior and your way of thinking. And keep in mind that you're not alone; we all go through long periods of frustration, anxiety, fear, upset, and worry.

Oftentimes, the quality of our lives has more to do with the foundational habits that we routinely run on a daily basis. By improving our habits, we can improve the quality of our lives on multiple spectrums. We need to understand what we want out of life, appreciate our uniqueness, love and celebrate ourselves etc.

Some questions that can help us assess our quality of life include

Physically

- Is your physical health adding to or detracting from your quality of life?
- How do certain food choices affect your mood and energy levels?
- How satisfied are you with your sleep quantity and quality?
- How often do you do bodily exercise?

Psychological

- Are you satisfied with how you manage your emotions and moods?
- Are you living in the present or do you find yourself reliving and relishing the past?
- Are you optimistic about the future?
- How resilient are you when faced with life stressors?

Social relationships

- Do you have a support system or someone to talk to about your struggles?
- How confident are you when you meet new people?
- Do you feel like you have good communication with your significant others/friends/family?

Spirituality/religion/personal beliefs

- Is religion/spirituality important to you?
- Do you have individuals with whom you can discuss your personal beliefs?
- Is spirituality a source of confusion for you?
- Is the media you consume helping you grow as a person?

There are no necessarily right and wrong answers here since quality of life is so personal and, experts don't agree on what it encompasses.

However, some steps you can take to make life more enjoyable, boost your personal well-being and make each day more meaningful, include

1. Happiness Habits

- Smile, even when stressed
- Daily gratitude
- Connect and spread love
- Meditate, not necessarily as a religious experience but practicing the art of meditation will boost your overall happiness, decrease stress, lower blood pressure, and ease anxieties.
- Daily Learning
- Find meaning in your job.

2. Health Habits

- Eat breakfast
- Drink plenty water
- Eat healthy foods -Vitamins & minerals

3. Vitality Habits

- Time Management
- Get at least 7 Hours of Sleep
- Exercise

4. Income Habit

Some income habits you need to implement on a daily basis include

- Set & Review Goals
- Save 20% of your income
- Track & audit expenses
- Invest in education
- Daily budgeting

5. Leisure Habits

What you do in your spare time has a significant impact on the quality of your life. Some habits that you can institute when you do happen to have time to yourself, which will considerably improve your life include

- Get organized
- Contribute to others' lives
- Socialize & network
- Do one thing you're afraid of. Overcome your fears and force yourself to do just one thing you're afraid of doing.
- Do one thing you've been putting off. This is a tremendous way to overcome procrastination and build the leisure habit of moving your life forward.

Reasons why you need to improve your quality of life

A good quality of life makes you happier.

It keeps you in a state of complete physical and mental well-being

It affects your social life positively

It leads to a more fulfilling and satisfying life

You are more productive.

For any questions or counselling, kindly contact the Wellness and Health Department

Key References

Quality of life by Crispin Jenkinson

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**BELIEVE IN YOURSELF:
YOU ARE UNIQUELY MADE**

MC Chukwu Stella

'Everyone was born a genius, but the process of life de-geniuses them'.

–R Buckminster Fuller

Everyone was born a sage with his/her own unique magic that will affect the world positively when the magic is practiced. However, trauma from early childhood, discouragement, verbal abuses, bullying and others often make one to stop believing that one can wield such magical powers.

Thus, the person stops believing; stops caring and stops seeing the possibility of being that unique person. All that is wanted is now to survive– go to school, get a job, get married, have children (upon whom the person most times end up imposing the dreams that he/she couldn't achieve).

This is the half-life syndrome that is the reality of many of us. No wonder the graveyard is the richest place in the world.

In order to come out of such situations and live your life to its length and breadth, you can do the following:

- 1. Become dead to criticisms, dead to shyness, dead to negative comments and all.** Move forward despite the challenges. Bear in mind that the world is a battlefield and you're not leaving this place alive. Concentrate on fighting to achieve your fullest potential, every other thing is a distraction.
- 2. Stop resisting and follow the promptings of your heart.** Do whatever it tells you that is right. Never argue with a hunch.
- 3. Keep up what you have started.** The road to the higher life is not linear. It is a curve of highs and lows. If you do what you do well enough for long enough, the universe will announce and reward you.

Sometimes, one can become discouraged. Discouraged that you want to say something but don't know how to say it. Discouraged that people don't show interest in the beautiful thoughts you share and you want to just quit.

If it and when it happens, it could be the evidence that you're about to conquer that difficult stage. As it is said, darkest comes before dawn. A more reinforced push will open that closed door.

When you have read all the books, watched all the motivational videos and you still feel down, read the Bible. Abandon yourself to God and He'll take care of all your concerns. Be courageous.

(Copied and edited)

MINDFULNESS

MC Kase Ngunan Sarah

Definition of key terms:

1. **Meditation:** means continuous and profound contemplation or musings on a subject or series of subjects of a deep or abstruse nature.
2. **Mindfulness:** is the trait of staying aware or paying close attention to your responsibilities.

It is also the quality of being conscious or aware of something. It could also be regarded as a mental state achieved by focusing your awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting your feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations, used as a therapeutic technique. In simple terms, it means being alert, aware, conscious, intentional, vigilant, focused, awake, prepared, watchful, deliberate, ready or staying awake without distractions.

Being mindful helps you to achieve goals. This is why Jesus Christ tells you to be alert. God neither sleeps nor slumbers. Even the devil is mindful of its assignment that is why it takes any opportunity available. Therefore, you are called to stop going about mindlessly because the devil you are playing with is not playing with you. Instead be mindful and intentional especially about being Godly.

WHAT IS THE PRACTICE OF MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness is practiced by being alert always, through meditation, and discipline. That is, not being absent minded, instead, the mind should be present and in control of all at all times.

HOW DOES ONE INCORPORATE THIS PRACTICE INTO LIFE SITUATIONS?

The practice of mindfulness can be incorporated into life situation by always being alert even while sleeping, for instance you could sleep with one eye open. That is even while asleep, you should be mindful of who you are. This means that you should be aware of your core values, consciously and unconsciously by deliberately storing this information in your memory.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF MINDFULNESS?

There are both short term and long-term benefits.

Short term benefits include being happy, content, peaceful calm and fulfilled. While long term benefits include achieving goals, dreams, vision and purpose.

HOW DOES IT IMPROVE OUR RELATIONSHIPS?

Mindfulness improves your relationship by making you more:

- attentive,
- considerate,
- sensitive,
- empathetic,
- appreciative,
- sacrificial, and helping you to be a better listener...

IS THERE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PRACTICE OF MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION?

Yes! There is a relationship between being mindful and meditation.

It exists because when you meditate about something (like a topic), you understand it better, that is, you are enlightened about its advantage, consequence and effect which guides you on the next step forward; (such that even if you fail - you fail - forward).

To meditate means to reflect deeply on a subject. Meditation is being in tune with your inner energy source. Have time alone with yourself, look inwards, review or retreat so you can rebound. Quiet the mind, and the soul will speak. Ma Jaya Sati Bhagavati said, "Remember, the body benefits from movement, but the mind benefits from stillness."

In meditating you find the mystery that connects your today to your tomorrow. It takes discipline to meditate because meditation is a labour dimension of faith as you will have to take out time to listen. Some religion encourage meditation. It also means stop, ponder, and think so you'll hear & see what others didn't. Meditation means to stay till you see and/or hear, that is, gain insight. To meditate means to ponder until understanding or comprehension is established.

Therefore, meditating helps you to be mindful because, in meditation you understand the need to be mindful. That is, knowing your WHY in meditation, helps you to be mindful. In other words, knowing WHY motivates you to do WHAT needs to be done.

You can make it a habit to set aside 10 minutes daily for meditation; where you can meditate on:

- YOUR DAILY ROUTINE; that is what you did the previous day and how you can do it differently (or better) today.

- YOUR FUTURE; that is, visualize success, mirror yourself as a success, then work towards it. This is because, picturing yourself at that top-notch personality or at that desired height, gets you in the mood to make more exploit and succeed.

It is important to note that being mindful through meditation helps you to develop personally and mentally. Therefore, the more developed you are - the more money you make!

In conclusion, the importance of mindfulness cannot be over- emphasized because it is what will bring you to your desired future. This is because if you are not mindful, your tomorrow will be like your today or worse; therefore, for you to enjoy the future you crave, you have to be deliberate (mindful or intentional) about it!

If you are in need of counseling, kindly contact the Wellness and Health Department

FINAL WORDS

MC Prof. Valentina Okeigbemen

Congratulations for going through this health manual. I sincerely believe that you have gleaned several ideas you can implement. Kindly do so. It is said that health is wealth. Hold on to your health in every area of life. Let the words in this book transform your life style into one of quality. Apply them to daily living and watch your life blossom. We had much pleasure writing as we believe you will have pleasure reading this book.

The Wellness and Health Department, Write-For-Me organization is comprised of a group of seasoned experts in the health profession who are certified Counsellors and Health Educators. For clarity sessions, you can visit <https://wfm.ogapatapata.com/store/ttm-consult> to make your booking. After you have made your booking, contact the head of department on +2348037124905.