

A 30-DAY SERIES

NO **EXCUSE** **CHALLENGE**

THIRTY EXCUSES, ANSWERED
ONE DAY AT A TIME.

ABRAHAM OLOGUNDUDU

ABOUT THE BOOK

This book is a compilation of a 30-day social media series from April 1st to April 30th 2016. The focus of this book is to help you debunk some ideologies or in this case excuses that you often hold unto that hinders you from reaching your full potential. I have also done well to expand more on certain areas as deemed needful.

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INTRODUCTION

A good leader takes responsibility for all his actions. The first leadership you and I have been called into is self-leadership (as the bible has it in the book of Genesis - be fruitful and multiply).

There can be no fruitfulness without visions, goals, relationships, etc. Also, you can't reach the height of fruitfulness, influence & excellence in life if excuses are not far from your lips. For you to maximize your potential, you will have to stop being so good at taking up excuses to defend your mistakes and decisions.

I often wonder why the same principles that have been tested, tried and taught for a long time seem to be working for selected few. They are so powerful, yet inaccessible to some people.

Stephen R. Covey, the best-selling author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* said “Common sense is not common practice.”

To many, It sounds too good to be true so they ignore working by principles. The key to personal growth is to practice. When you consistently work by natural principles that govern success, you will unlock your true potential. There has to be a level of mastery to optimally harness the benefits of any principle.

Mastery is not a random act. You gain mastery by being deliberate - by being intentional. In the part of the world where I live, a lot of people make excuses for playing small. They are pregnant with greatness but experience several miscarriages.

So as we begin this journey, you should deliberately decide not to make up any excuse each day for the next 30 days for your goals.

You will be taking the initiative to LEAD YOUR LIFE!

Abraham Ologundudu

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I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH RESOURCES

It's not what you don't have that limits you. It's what you have but don't know how to use.

STEVE HARRIS

Whenever God gives you an idea, it's because you already have something to start with. Earlier this year, I was trusting God for a tool that I felt was a priority to help my business. As I was planning towards obtaining the tool, I would convince myself that If only I could just lay my hands on the tool, I would do things differently.

It took a while but I finally got the opportunity to possess this tool. Amazingly, two weeks passed and I didn't do anything differently as I imagined. Then I discovered that my problem wasn't the tool. The issue was that I had not decided to be better. I didn't develop the mental capacity to do better. It hit me hard like a revelation.

The bitter truth is that nobody really has the problem of limited resources. We only fail to develop the mental capacity to use what we already have. Economics tells us we always have limited resources compared to our infinite needs. So you have to use what you have to get what you want.

There are several variations to these words. John Obidi, founder of SmartBcamp.com said “Use what you have because what you have is plenty.” Hamilton Mabie said “The question for each man to settle is

not what he would do if he had the means, time, influence and education advantages but what he will do with the things he has.” Mike Murdock said “Whatever God has already given to you will create anything else He has promised to you.”

I think one major problem is that a lot of people tend to always see the things they need to pursue their dreams in terms of money. Your Capital (Seed) is not necessarily money. In fact, it takes a lot more than money to live your dreams.

I remember when I discovered my path in life shortly after secondary school. I helped some friends simplify their challenges and it felt *good*. I started with a Facebook group that was called *Royal Youths Forum* back in 2010.

Then I stumbled upon blogging but I had no laptop. Yes! I had a Nokia C1 mobile phone and UC browser was compatible with blogger.com (Google’s blogging platform).

So the journey started. Typing long articles on that phone was *real pain* but my vision kept me going. It got to a point I could send text or chat without looking at my key pad and I was so fast! Sometimes, I would deprive myself lunch to alternate between cyber cafes and my home.

I used what I had! A lot had changed since then and it gets better daily. The truth is that each person tends to underrate what they possess and overrate what they do not possess. The way to deal with this is for you to develop the habit to always write down your ideas. Always write. It helps with clarity. Transform them into written *smart* goals, then search within for what you have to start with. When you break down your big ideas into tiny pieces, you will see that you have something to start with.

I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH EXPERIENCE

Be brave. Take risks. Nothing can substitute experience.

PAULO COELHO

If you do not have the experience as you claim, to get started on your ideas or burdens, go and get it. You do not get experience by waiting for it to happen. You have to engage.

There is really no excuse whatsoever. Just by using Google or YouTube, you have access to the information that is needed to get yourself together. The real problem might just be fear. The *experience* talk might just be a cover up.

The first man to land on the moon, never had any *moon travelling* experience. You can't get your head above the waters if you never stick your neck out.

You might be saying "I don't know how it's going to turn out." You are right. Just push to know it. You may ask "what if I go wrong?" Well, no one will kidnap you for that. You just *gained* an experience.

Quite a number of persons just have this vague idea of following through on what matters most. It's just on the surface. No depth. The way out is to be totally consumed by the thought that failure is part of the process.

How many days have you spent already this year? You really had a lot on your mind at the beginning of the year. Please, stop delaying and do it afraid.

I have made a couple of mistakes in my life time but I am better for it. I now know what not to do. I really feel like opening your head just to load you with the fact that every human success was born out of several failures. Do a background check on people you admire. They have messed up before.

I will rather *mess up* (fail) to fulfillment than die in my imagination. Have you ever seen any baby that just suddenly start walking perfectly? Become a baby today. Fall, bruise your knee, and try to stand, fall again until you find stability.

If there's something you really want to do that will make a difference and you don't know how, seek for it.

THERE'S TIME FOR EVERYTHING

Know the true value of time; snatch, seize, and enjoy every moment of it... Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.

PHILIP STANHOPE

Many have left this world saying there's time for everything. Some other people even say "God's time is the best." These might be valid words but often used wrongly. You may have been saying this for 5, 10, 20, 30 years and your desires are making you sick.

King Solomon said "hope long delayed makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life." He also said "the desires of the slothful kills him for his hands refuse to labour."

Test the motive behind you saying those words, if you will find yourself guilty. You might be using it as a defense scheme to cover up for your fears. Face your demons. So many times when you think you are waiting for God, He had been waiting for you all along.

God has a deposit in you and you determine the interest. Remember your simple interest formula back in secondary school? It grows with time. I believe the earlier you get enlisted by yourself into the tribe of purposeful living, the better for you.

Your mantra of *there is time for everything* might just be procrastination in disguise. The writer who scribbled the words *there's*

time for everything actually specified different times for several matters. I don't remember seeing *time for idleness*.

I remember attending an event called LEAP Summit on the 2nd of April, 2016 and a couple of us on the team came late. I can recall vividly that the co-host, Dayo Samuel scolding us after the event and he said "you have control over your time."

So true. You can exercise your control when you determine what you do with every minute of your time. If you wait for the perfect condition to attend to your deepest desires you will never get anything done.

GOD HAS A PLAN FOR ME

God's plan for you can only materialize when you dutifully align yourself with it.

ABRAHAM OLOGUNDUDU

I challenge these words sometimes because in this part of the world, many persons use God as a defense for staying idle. Your responsibility is fully yours. God won't set goals for you, study for you, research for you, go to events for you, build relationships for you, start a company for you, or even write a book for you.

It's your responsibility to initiate those actions. It's your responsibility to dream, desire and get started. I believe God's plans are always accompanied with instructions. And instruction precedes action. There was no book in the Bible called *plan of the apostles*, we only have *Acts of the Apostles*.

I am not against plans. But there are many people with an attitude of many Nigerian politicians. So many *we are planning and working on it* and we never get to see anything.

Remember in the last chapter, I said "God has a deposit in you and you determine the interest." You can't stay idle, singing *his plan and will for me is good...* and expect to be productive.

The plan lies in the deposit. Initiate transactions with your deposit. Planning is good but action is better. The purpose of a plan is to have structured actions.

You can be the most religious person and confess all you can, but if you do not take actions, nothing will happen. Oprah Winfrey said “I came to realize that for all these times I was praying to God, asking for God to do something, God was waiting on me.”

Are you sure God is not waiting for you?

I WANT A HUMBLE/SIMPLE LIFE

If your quest for simplicity is at the cost of full expression of your potentials, quit it.

ABRAHAM OLOGUNDUDU

The basis for people who give this excuse is that they believe not everyone should be on the spot light. This is quite true but can also be applied wrongly.

It could be a defense tactic to dodge responsibilities. Preferring to take up things that are very convenient to do. You build a wall around yourself called *the comfort zone*. Brian Tracy calls it *the path of least resistance*. It's the easy road and a lot of people always choose to travel through this route.

You might be avoiding being stretched. If it requires extra commitment, you often pull back.

On several occasions, I have received this statement or similar ones like "I don't want people to know me." Eighty per cent of the time, the individual involved was actually scared of doing something wrong.

Who says living your best life will cause you to be less humble or have a complex life? If you even find yourself in such situation, your choices produced it. So, you can undo it.

Don't limit your potential in the name of humility. It's just like some people who equate holiness to poverty. Humility is first *a state of the heart*. Whatever people can see, is just an expression of your inner state. The best value system to live by is that which helps you maximize your potential.

Robert Frost said “two roads diverged in the woods, but I took the one less travelled.”

The road less travelled is the path to greatness. It is the path to reach full potential. The road mostly travelled is called *the path of least resistance*.

It is a road where the sojourners have no vision nor are they driven by purpose. It's the easy way filled with instant gratification.

The road less travelled is scarcely filled with people with vision, conviction, passion and purpose. They shun instant gratification for future celebration. Although, this road is filled with adversities but they know that oppositions and obstacles are constant. Their obsessions of their desired future is stronger than the challenge before them.

Be sure that your quest for *simplicity* is not fueled by the desire for instant gratification.

I HAVE TRIED IT BEFORE IT DIDN'T WORK

It's failure that gives you the proper perspective on success.

ELLEN DEGENERES

You might have tried to get started with something in the past but you got embarrassed, disappointed or hurt. This kind of experiences can create a mental and emotional block that keeps you stuck at a spot.

The thoughts keep hunting you and it becomes a monster to you. It can be very sad and might even deserve a *pity party*. Well, I am sorry. The past should be left behind. It's gone. The good part is that you have the power to let go. Trust me, you can. You can overcome that mental block and move on. Don't sit there to make a mountain out of it.

Thomas Edison is remembered today for the light bulb. But I believe it must have been a frustrating experience. With a record of 1000 attempts, there would have been a lot of mental and emotional battles. Carrying out different experiments over and over again.

Imagine if Nelson Mandela organized a *pity party* to keep sobbing because he went to prison. Success is for the bold. Do not let your past possess you. Learn and move on. Shake it off. If you hold on to the past, you are in a prison and you are the jailer.

There is a resistance you have to overcome. You can't push just a little and quit. If you keep using your past as an excuse, you won't get

anywhere. Failure, hurt, pain and disappointment are all part of the process.

If you decide to be relentless, you won't break. Hold on! What matters most is what you are doing now. It can make amends for the past and create a desirable future

During my personal study, I discovered something called Murphy's Law. It states that whatever that can go wrong will go wrong at the worst possible time.

I first learnt about this Murphy's Law in a book by Willie Jolley, best-selling author of *it only takes a minute to change your life*.

Jolley explained in the book that "Murphy will come and visit everyone at some time or another. Murphy is the king of setbacks. He creates setbacks and makes sure that everybody has some."

Apparently, Murphy's Law applies to every single human. We all have experienced some setbacks at one point in our lives. However, not everyone remains bound to king Murphy. It's only those who tread the path of least resistance and give up easily that get to allow king Murphy win. But those who apply the principle of persistence will eventually send king Murphy packing.

The principle of persistence states that in the midst of adversity, the longer you stay resilient, the stronger you become and the weaker the challenge, then you ultimately win. Adversity is the universe way of helping you become stronger.

In order to defeat Murphy, Willie Jolley in his book mentioned three things that you must have – faith, focus and follow-through. He puts it this way – "Faith in yourself, your dreams and faith in God... The unmovable believe that all will be well because God is with you. Focus

on what truly matters to you. Focus on your goal and mission. Focus on the solution instead of the problem. Follow-through on those things that you said you will do. You have to resist the temptation to go easy or quit and follow through with ruthless execution.”

If after a couple of trial you give up, I guess you are not tough enough. Even King Solomon said “If you faint in the time of adversity, your strength is small.”

I JUST WANT TO BE NORMAL

As far as I am concerned, I'm not here to live a normal life. I am sent here on a mission.

HOWARD FINSTER

This is an extended version of day 5. It's the love for average. Other related expressions include: *I tried my best* or *I can't kill myself*. It's always about your comfort.

You are not really concerned about reaching your true potential. As long as you made an effort, the universe must commend you. You actually have zero tolerance for change and your third name is *status quo*.

You can spend so much energy trying to defend your position instead of just going with change. It's just not cool to function like a 4 megabyte diskette when your capacity is like a 1 terabyte hard drive.

Whatever you are now is small compared to your true capacity. You can be more. Don't hide behind balance. Your existence is beyond you. Think global. Don't settle yet. Explore further.

I believe normal is boring. I barely watch football matches but I know the game is more interesting when tension is in the air – especially when one team is dangerously attacking the opponent in the box 18. Also, people celebrate some football players than others because they offer much more entertainment.

In life, the people we celebrate on both local and international level are people who added *extra* to the *ordinary* we were all used to. There is something that lies within you that is beyond you. That is where your fulfillment lies. That is where you birth a legacy that will outlive you. Heed to the call of the extraordinary life today.

DOUBLE CHECK YOUR MOTIVE

A moral being is one who is capable of reflecting on his past actions and their motives of approving of some and disapproving of others.

CHARLES DARWIN

It's always good to double check the motives behind your words and actions. In the last seven days I have shared about some personal excuses.

I have attempted to question some thought patterns. It's detrimental to cultivate the habit of defending your present position in life. You may unconsciously begin to settle.

At this point, as you continue reading this book, I crave your indulgence to have an open mind. Dutifully double check yourself on those areas that applies to you. This is not a book with the purpose of criticizing and judging. It is meant to serve as a tool for revelation. To help you discover certain things that might have been placing limitations on your God given potential.

Every action you execute in life was a judgment given at the court of your mind. And your mind will only judge based on the *evidences* (information) available to it. So, it is actually important to double check that the information your mind has been working with are valid

and can drive desired results. If you want to make a change, go offensive. Develop your power of choice to *lead* your life intentionally.

ENVIRONMENTAL EXCUSE

People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are they who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and if they can't find them, make them.

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

The excuses you make about your environment. This can really be a clever way to put the blame on external factors without being caught.

Well, you are about to get busted! You really need to understand how much control you have. You might not have control over people and environment but you can determine your response.

Don't blame external factors for the things that concern your life. Take charge and create your own outcomes. You have the creative force to determine what you produce. If anything external affects you, it was by your permission.

I said in the previous chapter that your mind works with the information available around you. If you don't deliberately feed it with what is most important, it will pick for itself what it can reach.

In an environment like ours in Nigeria, where people are grossly immersed in the tradition of throwing blames and feeling like victims, if you do not shield yourself, you will be unconsciously initiated into the tribe.

These is the worst kind of excuse anyone can make. It is an expression that indicates that you have sold out the responsibility you have over your life to circumstances.

It's ultimately an offence against yourself because God never designed it that way. God told Joshua "...and you shall make your way prosperous." There were several places in the Bible where God would tell a man to be strong and courageous.

It is because no one can do that for you. You cannot delegate courage to another person. It's a function of your personal commitment. Therefore, any result you birth is a function of how you nurture the circumstances around you. We would spend another couple of days fully dealing with more of this external excuses we create to feed mediocrity. This is an opportunity to reclaim the right over life. I celebrate your courage to intentionally lead your life daily.

I DON'T HAVE ANY ONE TO HELP ME

You are the architect and engineer of your life.

DAYO SAMUEL

You do not have to settle your life on the help people will give you. The context here is when you totally anchor your life on what people will and will not do for you. This is what we call a dependency mentality. There are people who are actually looking around for someone who will take away all their *problems* and personalize it.

It's like looking for someone to trade your responsibility with. This mindset will keep you below. You are positioning your mind to think you are not capable of helping yourself.

These will keep producing the aura that will empower you to remain helpless. Snap out of this thought pattern. If there's anywhere you should look, it's within and above (divine).

You are not supposed to think dependence or independence. Rather, think interdependently. Which means you should have something to contribute to this world. If you are always thinking of being at the receiving end, your hands shall always be below. This dependency mentality has been the bane of many.

Some people go religious and pray for their helper to locate them. But they stay idle. Locate you to do what?

If the help actually comes, you won't be recognized because there is nothing in your hands. Don't replace common sense with spirituality. Spiritual intelligence and mental intelligence have different roles.

Apostle Paul told the Roman Church, "...be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Every change you want to see starts from your mind and not by creating *please help me* posters and flyers by your thoughts, words and actions.

The moment you begin to see help as a right and not a privilege, you begin to distance yourself from it. This is because no one likes to have more liabilities than assets.

Everyone has a cross to carry. Some are quite heavier than others. Never rest on the idea that you are where you are today because someone refused to help you. You are where you are because of the information at your disposal and the decisions you have made.

THE ECONOMY IS VERY BAD

Reactive people are often affected by their physical environment. They find external sources to blame for their behavior.

STEPHEN R. COVEY

Most persons who spread this message sit on the premise of practicality and reality. Other variations include: "Let's be real, don't deny the fact, and let's face the truth."

There are other expressions but you need to understand that reality is a context. You create your own realities. Yes, there are prevailing challenges but you should not make a mountain out of it.

In this same *bad economy* as people insinuate, a good number of persons are still doing what they want. They are buying houses, cars and so on. These are people who choose to see opportunities and leverage promptly.

So why use this as an excuse for your results? Create your personal reality which is a function of your thoughts, beliefs and convictions.

You know why a man in the part of the world where I live would go ahead to rape a woman or even an *insane woman* (whose stench is choking)? He has a different personal reality based on his thoughts, beliefs and convictions.

Any economic challenge is a stimulus and your ability to choose the right response will determine the reality you create for yourself. Your responses to circumstances determines your outcome. You are a product of your choice.

I don't understand why so many people have made a song out of this statement – the economy is bad. Even as at the period when the country was *flourishing* as people insinuate, there were still millions of people who died in poverty, without reaching full potential and people who never even discovered their unique gifting.

Therefore, it has never been about financial crunch or economic recessions but mentality crunch and common sense recession. When people alarm about the economy, I wonder if they are expecting an angel to come wipe all away.

The prosperity of any economy is a function of the prosperity of the people. Great people make a great nation not the other way round. If you are the only one that can align yourself with prosperity, then you better stop blaming the economy. Start creating *your economy*.

SO MANY PERSONS HAVE TRIED IT BUT IT DIDN'T WORK

Success is not obtained overnight. It comes in installments; you get a little bit today, a little bit tomorrow until the whole package is given out.

ISRAELMORE AYIVOR

You often hear people say, "Oh forget it. Don't bother trying. A lot of people smarter than you got it wrong."

This kind of information should be handled carefully. Applying what I call the *principle of intention* - what is the source? Are you sure it's not a quick get-away scheme from giving your best? It's more like validating your capacity and ability by other people's results. It is a very wrong metric.

I remember those times in the University when I get into a new academic semester. A lot of us go around trying to get information about the compulsory and elective courses for the semester. We would often go ask those who had gone ahead of us in that department. Most of the time, I get reports such as: "You can't impress the lecturer enough." Or "Nobody has ever had an 'A' in that course."

When the so called *scholars* in higher levels tell you things like this, you might end up believing. It's a psychological operation. If that

information after processing becomes your conviction, you have mentally programmed yourself for doomsday.

You already pictured under-performance in your mind. There is absolutely no way you will produce any result better than that. The thought pattern which is a limiting belief will produce a negative energy which will in turn attract negative experiences. It's either you begin to read hard in fear and anxiety or you get discouraged from reading.

When I get those negative testimonies, ninety five per cent of the time, I proved people wrong. They would say, "The lecturer doesn't award A's". I just laugh and say to myself "Watch me get the result."

Some people even pray hard. It won't work if your mind is wrongly positioned. This can be applied to several situations. Don't use people's negative report as a yardstick for your performance. Instead of using that as an excuse for underperformance, commit yourself to learn from those mistakes and carve a new pathway for yourself.

THEY HAVE AN ADVANTAGE (CONNECTION) THAT I DO NOT HAVE

It's not who you are that holds you back, it's who you think you're not.

HANOCH MCCARTY

This is not the same as living interdependently which I mentioned on Day 10. The idea behind this statement is critical. The average African man always seek for connection. He believes that is the only means to get what he wants.

Little wonder, people have devised many dubious means to get what they want. He believes there has to be help from a *higher class* in order to truly live the life he desires. Well, anyone can believe what they want right? Absolutely!

So let's apply the *principle of intention* and debunk the idea. This is most time a product of dependency mentality. You are actually saying "I am not adequate enough so I need someone who is capable to push me up."

It's true that no man is an island. But to stand on the fact that the reason you haven't birth your desired result is because some other people have an advantage you don't have is a fallacy.

Remember, we discussed on Day 1 that what you have is enough. Don't get it twisted. There are oppositions, challenges and grand obstacles. But nothing is strong enough to stop you if you have the right mental positioning.

You need right connections in life. You need people. But it should never be because you see yourself as being disadvantaged. No, you need people because of the power of synergy. When your energy meets another energy it creates a *nuclear reaction* that will light up the world. You are only disadvantaged when you believe it.

NOBODY KNOWS ME. NO ONE REALLY CARES ABOUT WHAT I HAVE TO SAY

If you really put small value upon yourself, be rest assured that the world will not raise your price.

ANONYMOUS

I know this feeling. Everyone has this natural inclination to protect his or her ego. By default, we would shield ourselves from embarrassment and disappointment.

You are not alone. You are not the first and you won't be the last to feel this way. There is nothing wrong with you. It is part of the process and you need to pass the stage by discarding this excuse.

When you stick to thoughts and words like this, you are ultimately declaring your failure and defeat even before starting. You will be treated the way you present yourself. Do not limit your potential by writing yourself off. Life doesn't favour those who deserve it but those who desire it.

If you truly desire it, you will act and properly align yourself with it. That is, you have to prove to people that you are worth listening to. Respect and trust has to be earned. Hence, when you consistently offer a certain amount of value over time, you will attract the respect and trust of people.

Your focus should not be on the problem but the solution – which is the value you have to offer. Everyman is by default attracted to valuable objects. Your job is to express your value.

Every *known* person of influence were once an *unknown*. You just have to gather the confidence you need. The best way to do this is to identify who qualifies for your offer. Gradually put out your story and with the feedback you get, you can build momentum.

However, everyone will not care about your message but the selected few that needs it will be attracted if well communicated. Please reflect on yourself. Identify your limiting beliefs and seek answers to deal with it.

For example you might have suffered hard criticism from parents or guardian in the past. This could be the mental block still replaying in your mind and stopping you from moving ahead.

There has to be a starting point to begin your transition process from *known* to *unknown*. What you need is a proper head start and the right commitment to follow through.

If you really know you have something to offer, take the spotlight away from *yourself*. You might be withholding something magnanimous, capable of changing someone's life out there.

Why not focus on the joy and fulfillment that you will get. Think about the thousands of people and more, that you would be adding value to their lives.

IT MIGHT WORK FOR OTHERS - BUT NOT FOR ME

Whatever we expect with confidence becomes our own self-fulfilling prophecy.

BRIAN TRACY

Another version of this statement would be "Because it worked for *insert name* doesn't mean it would work for me."

Let's do an *intention test* that applies to you fully maximizing your potential.

It could mean that you may be scared of stepping into something bigger than your present capacity. It could also mean that you are not willing to learn from others. What about if it's because you don't want anyone to brush your ego?

Take time to really know your *why*. These statements are based on the ideology that everyone is unique and have *their time to shine*. But many people have adopted these words as a code of defense for doing *nothing*.

It's true that you can't step into everyone shoes. But take care to know what and when to learn from others. Especially those producing the kind of results you desire. You have to know that being average is so easy.

I once watched an interview of Brian Tracy and while answering a question, he said “success is predictable. It’s like a cooking recipe. As long as you put together the right ingredient in the right proportion, you will get the desired meal.”

I totally agree with his illustration. What he ultimately revealed to us is the power of principles. There is nothing new under the sun.

Whatever you want to achieve, there is someone who have found the answer. Whatever you are going through, there is someone who had successfully gone through it. Don’t begin to act like a *superman*. The principle that worked for others will work for you.

That’s why it is called a *principle* – because when applied, will always produce the underlying results. If it doesn’t work, the issue might be that you never believed it was going to work. It’s a self-fulfilling prophecy.

I HAVE GOT BILLS TO PAY

"The three most harmful addictions are heroin, carbohydrates, and a monthly salary."

BEHANCE TEAM

I have observed a recurring cycle in many people in Nigeria. When they were young, they had great dreams. They go through formal education and graduate from the University. National Youth Service is next, then struggle to get a job. Get married and have kids. Daily hustle to meet family needs. Grow old and become grandparents till their chapter closes. This is just a boring cycle.

You don't exist to just pay bills. If this is what life is about, what's the point? Of course, you have to meet your daily needs but there is more to your life than that.

Abraham Maslow hierarchy of needs shows that these needs are just the basic. It's at the base of the pyramid. You need more. Esteem needs and self-actualization needs are at the top. Most people don't get there or preferably people don't find full expressions at these levels.

They have the inner unrest but don't deliberately respond promptly. Don't conform to the resistance. You can learn to break through.

The thought of recurring bills can be pressuring. I think I have a little idea of what it means. I am still single, without any added responsibility of a wife and children. But when I take a look at my bills in my financial journal, I often wonder how I got through and some

other days, I just laugh so hard - because the bill seem to be talking hard to me. Talking bills!

The secret is to be intentional. If there are other things that you know you should be doing, the only way you can and will get it done is when you start planning for it. Let it be in your face. See it every day and allocate a set time to develop it.

Bills will always grow, expenses never stop coming in. So, you had better start giving attention to the things that matter most to you. After all has been said and done, the most excellent way is the way of fulfilment.

THERE IS SO MUCH HAPPENING. I NEED BALANCE

Everything negative – pressure, challenges – is all an opportunity to rise.

KOBE BRYANT

Honestly, there is so much pressure around you daily that can act as a resistance to make you give up. You may be forced to conform in order to feel safe.

I remember during my final year before the maiden edition of my event - Leverage Conference. Series of challenges surfaced.

Final year project was knocking, Leverage Conference was knocking, daily leadership responsibilities were knocking, my part time job was knocking, and a host of others.

It was a lot to take up at a time. At least that was what I thought. I could multi task but it was like a new ground to explore. The peak was when my valuables were stolen. My laptop and a smart phone along five other smart phones and a laptop that belonged to my friends were stolen from my room. You know those kind of pain you feel but can't touch it? Exactly! It was really painful!

However, I somehow remained calm and often laughed about it. I moved on and got my backup laptop. I didn't mention, my final year

project and other important resources were gone with the first laptop.

The materials and other resources for Leverage Conference were also taken, as plans were ongoing. It was actually double expenses and time to be spent.

A couple of weeks went by. We were making more progress till the straw broke the camel's back. The backup laptop got missing again in that same room! It was terrific!

This time I had a flash drive backup of my project and my friend's laptop also housed my project. Flash drive and friends system suddenly crashed! Stuff happens right? Absolutely! It felt like witch hunting.

In less than 7 weeks, 3 laptops (2 were mine) and 5 smartphones (1 belonged to me) with 4 years of works (including recent project work) all gone.

This is why I have found a new love in cloud storage. Anyway, it wasn't really about the items but I was in the process of doing something significant and several oppositions kept rising.

Well, I still needed to stay committed to my responsibilities and my personal project (Leverage Conference). I had to lead my team to remain focused. Though it seems like everything kept bouncing back.

This was the time I needed *balance*. I wanted all to be calm. I had several thoughts of quitting my part time job and even Leverage Conference just to focus on academics and fellowship leadership responsibilities. But ever! It wasn't even possible. It didn't even make sense for me to quit.

I realized that if I had done that, it would have been a lazy man approach. It would have been an excuse that prevented me from

birthing the results I wanted.

Thank God I didn't throw in the towel. I wanted the so called *balance*.

Anyway, I had great friends, great team with creative ideas and everyone's laptop in my circle became mine. Aha! So my team and I dealt with Leverage Conference. During intense lectures close to examination period, we had over 250 audience. It was a dream come true.

My invited speakers Yemisi Odusanya of Sisiyemmie.com and Michael Okeje, former Marketing Lead of Jobberman and his team were amazing!

Everyone present had a great experience because it was beyond the normal events that hold in Lagos State University.

Then I faced my final year project with sleepless nights to meet the deadline. Within two weeks, the first draft of chapter 1 to 4 were complete. In record time my full project was up and ready on a couple of laptops. Eventually, I got one of the best projects in my unit.

What's the essence of this long story? It means a lot to me because the pressure was intense and I would have pulled out but didn't. I picked the lessons and grew capacity.

The benefit and growth you are seeking often lies in the pain and discomfort. For example, if you want to build your muscles, you can't lift a light weight a couple of times and stop. Nothing significant will happen.

Actually, you need a slightly heavy weight capable of weakening your muscle. You will have to endure a while. Your muscle fibers get weak and experience some wear and tear.

The fibers eventually repairs itself and it doubles in strength to be able to accommodate that amount of pressure next time. And the cycle continues. It's in the wearing, tearing and healing of the muscle fibers that you get built up.

So don't quit if you know that's the right thing you are doing. It would be a big excuse. Hang in there and develop capacity. I didn't understand the essence of those challenges until this year. The journey continues anyway. Long way to go.

I HAVE A DISABILITY

I'm officially disabled, but I'm truly enabled because of my lack of limbs. My unique challenges have opened up unique opportunities to reach so many in need.

NICK VUJICIC

I would illustrate with Nick Vujicic's Story. If you know Nick, you would agree that his story is really electrifying. This is my little quota of encouraging anyone having a big challenge coping with any disability.

He was born with rare disorder characterized by the absence of legs and arms called Phocomelia. Nick dealt not only with the typical challenges of school and adolescence, such as bullying and self-esteem issues, he also struggled with depression and loneliness as he questioned why he was different from all the other kids.

He couldn't get the haunting question of "Why was I the one born without arms and legs?" out of his head. Vujicic notes that he was bullied so badly during his childhood that he attempted suicide at just 10 years old.

As Nick grew up, he learned to deal with his disability and gradually accomplished more on his own. Nick actually got inspired to speak to others by the school janitor who encouraged him to share his message of overcoming adversity. Vujicic has spoken to millions of people across 57 countries in 5 Continents.

Vujicic advises readers not to wallow in self-pity, but to learn to accept the gift of life, learn to laugh, give thanks to God and be willing to serve others before oneself.

His main goal, he notes, is to share God's love with his readers and listeners, whom he wishes to experience the brightness and satisfaction he believes that God planned for them.

He often says that people ask him "why are you so happy?" He answers that he is happy because he is one of God's creations and that there are no limits on his life and goals.

He is the author of *Life without Limits: Inspiration for a Ridiculously Good Life*, translated into over 30 languages. He also has several other publications.

Vujicic is the founder of Attitude is Altitude - a motivational speaking company and Life without Limbs - an international non-profit organization. He is an award winning actor, New York Times best-selling author, speaker and musician. He is married to Kanae Miyahara and has two sons.

You can't determine your challenges but you can choose your responses. You are called first to *self-leadership*. I have learnt this over and over again. The only limitations that exists are the ones you place on yourself.

I DON'T WANT TO GET A 'NO'

Rejection is merely a redirection; a course correction to your destiny.

BRYANT MCGILL

Actually, it might not be a literal statement but all signs indicates your fear of rejection. On Day 16, I mentioned Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of need.

Taking a closer look at that pyramid, I observed that some wrong approaches to your *esteem needs* can get in the way of *self-actualization needs*. Most times, in your attempt to protect your ego, you prevent yourself from some significant difference you could have made.

It might even be that the person(s) you look up to due to their expertise and experience actually discredited you. Well, many *experts* have actually missed the bigger picture due to their so called *expertise*.

The wright brothers got so many *it's impossible* but still went ahead to produce a great invention - the airplane. J.k Rowlings best known as the author of the *Harry Potter* fantasy series had a number of rejections from publishers. The books have gained worldwide attention, won multiple awards, and sold more than 400 million copies. They have become the best-selling book series in history.

I am not saying these people were super humans and super awesome than you. But they found a way to move through those emotional process till the end. You can also do that.

However, expert's advice are very helpful and important to help with insights in other to make good decisions. The take away from today is not to allow one or two rejections or the fear of rejection to keep you from your desired goal. I can be so gentle but when I have to be stubborn, I will be stubborn! Stay stubborn!

I AM TOO OLD/YOUNG

Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.

MARK TWAIN

I remember during my second year as an undergraduate in Lagos State University, an octogenarian graduated with a second class, upper division from the department of sociology.

This man walked with a bent back. I had the privilege to interact with him once. We were in a bus together, heading from Iyana Iba to Mile 2, Lagos state. He was busy reading his lecture note. The bus was so tight but the man wasn't even bothered.

The amazing thing was that he read without glasses conveniently. There were several times I would see him in the University library reading. For a man in his 80's, it was really challenging.

We all love KFC (Kentucky Fried Chicken). Harland Sanders, the founder of KFC started promoting his cooking style at 66. To the ladies, Mary Kay Ash - one of the most influential business women in America history didn't break out until 45.

Mark Zuckerberg is worth \$48.2 billion at 31 (don't get carried away by the figures). There are a lot more examples to learn from. The focus today is not about what these guys accomplished but the process they went through.

That's what people don't see. If you are motivated, that's good. But this is not primarily about motivation. So you don't make a mistake of jumping out without a plan.

This is about you breaking through your limiting beliefs. It's about you making up your mind today to do what it takes to get what you truly desire.

The sophistication of this dispensation makes it inexcusable for anyone to hide behind age. As long as you are alive, it is never too late to take that bold step towards living your dream. It is better to be laughed at for being too young and ambitious than to live unfulfilled.

David J. Schwartz said "it's one's attitude towards age that makes it a blessing or a barricade."

I HAVE TRIED MY BEST. NO ONE IS PERFECT

I believe the idea that no one is perfect, means that there's room for improvement, and not an excuse to breed mediocrity.

ABRAHAM OLOGUNDUDU

Let us take time to apply the *principle of intention* I introduced in the previous days. In my lifetime, I have seen so many persons use the word *nobody is perfect* to breed mediocrity.

This is what I believe that statement really means. Whatever you are now, you can be more. That is not the apex of your capacity. You still have a big room for improvement.

One way to do this is to invest in your own education. Not the type you get in the University. Invest in self-building education. Things that will help you develop capacity and competence.

Don't be like those that always complain about fees of events, books, and others. This is not for everyone. So if you want to experience growth, stop crying *nobody is perfect* everywhere you go.

Instead continuously say '*I can be better and I will be better.*' Then take steps to become better. Say no to average. That's all!

There is this tendency to feel like a champion when you are surrounded by people who think small. You begin to think the world

deserves to credit you for a job well done. In my lifetime, I have come to believe that there will always be more you can offer.

This reminds me of Joshua – Moses servant in the Bible. He thought he was well accomplished (actually he was) at an old age and have conquered many lands. But God still told him, he had many more lands yet to cover but he was stricken in age. The point here is that there were still more Joshua was supposed to do.

Never settle for mediocrity. Always raise your desire and rise up to meet it. Most times, when you labour to an extent and stop halfway, someone else will come reap the harvest.

I also remember a cartoon image I saw on a friends Blackberry Messenger display picture. A man had dug through a tunnel for a long distance and at a point stopped. Unknowingly to him, he was just few meters away from a well of diamonds. As he was leaving the tunnel, someone else was coming in with a digger. Fortune was close to him but he gave up.

Persistence and the discipline to commit to your dreams truly guarantees fulfillment.

THERE'S NO ENOUGH TIME. I AM SO BUSY

It's not enough to be busy. So are the ants. The question is: what are we busy about?

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

To start with today, If you reflect on what we have covered in the last 21 days you would be able to come up with a similar conclusion with me. There is nothing I have shared that is new stuff. There might have been new illustrations but still the same timeless principle.

I am not doing this to discredit myself but to re-affirm a fact. We enjoy saying "hmm, inspiring, wow, amazing, deep and so on" than taking action.

I dealt with a version where people say *there is time for everything* on Day 3. Well, some people also think they are too busy to do what really matters to them.

The best way out of this is to master when to say *yes* and when to say *no*. There are so many seemingly urgent but unimportant things we get caught up in daily. You need to identify them.

Also, identify your time leakers. It could be social media, unnecessary gist, sleep or even television. Do a reality check right now and examine your daily routine. Are there things you engage in that don't add any value to you? Prioritize and do the things that really matter most to you.

When I hear this statement from people, I only come to one conclusion – They are not really passionate about it. When you are truly passionate about something and it consumes you, you can go all the way to create time for it.

For example, addicted gamblers who are even occupied with a 9-5 job still find time to gamble. If they do not attend to their desire, they are never going to be at rest.

Another fascinating example is how people out of their busy schedule make out time to watch football matches. There are men who after facing terrible traffic on their way back from work and are practically exhausted, still make out time to watch a football match.

Why is this? It's simple. They have associated a sense of pleasure to watching football. The entertaining aspect of football and the joy of being able to talk to friends about the game.

If it's really your passion and you know how much importance it means to you, you will stop making that excuse and start making moves. It is very possible to be so busy for a whole year but without any significant level of accomplishment and fulfillment.

I WANT TO BE COMFORTABLE DOING IT

Life begins at the end of your comfort zone.

NEALE DONALD WALSH

In life, there are certain things you won't be comfortable with due to your personality. This is definitely as a result of your belief system.

The questions today to ask yourself are: Is my comfort stopping me from making the progress I desire? Is my desire for convenience robbing me of a significant impact?

It's no news that we can reach new milestones when we move out of our comfort zone and challenge the status quo. This does not in any way mean you should work outside your strength zone.

Your strength is your unique advantage. But its impact gradually becomes minimal when you keep using it at a level you have already conquered.

Your strength is also of no relevance when you refuse to accept new challenges. Always go for the juggernaut. Don't seek for cheap and easy. There is a saying that life begins at the end of your comfort zone.

I remember my physics teacher back in secondary school. Each time he gave us a bunch of physics calculations and we all wail and complain – he would always tell us “never be scared of problems. Life is full of problems and physicist love solving problems.”

I believe those words robbed on me and had contributed to my love for physics. I have always done well in this subject and other related science subjects. I ended up finishing top of my class in *physics and education* at the University level.

This wasn't because I always know all the principles, laws and formulas to apply but because I have always had the right attitude. I always have the belief that I could solve the problem.

In life, it's either you are leaving a problem, in a problem or approaching a problem. So if you are looking for a very comfortable and peaceful time to get started on your dreams, you may never achieve anything.

The only way to get a juice out of a fruit is to apply pressure by pressing it. The greatness juice in you can only find expression in the midst of pressure and adversity. Don't despise it. Instead, take advantage of it and use it as a tool to achieve your goal.

IT'S TOO DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH

Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.

THOMAS EDISON

It's really a matter of perspective. When you meet an obstacle, you might see a problem while another see an opportunity.

It all depends on what you think you can make out of it. Think of it, if it's all a smooth ride, everyone should be living the good life they desire.

What you call hard and difficult, is most time opportunity in disguise. As I said, this is not about motivation. But if you are motivated, that's good for you.

I have sought for the easy way several times, but I discovered by experience that there is no such thing as that. If you want to stand out, deal with situations and don't hide from it.

A champion in any field took the decision first to face the challenge. If you don't have things that can confront your dreams, please dream again.

You admire people running a multi-million company and other similar things. Do you think that comes by wishful thinking? Do you think things like that comes by dancing around easy stuff?

I encourage you not to seek cheap and easy. Accept big challenges and approach them with a victor mindset

One way to deal with difficulties is to have a *why* behind your actions. Have a strong reason behind your vision. Each time you fall, it's the reason you are getting back up.

Life truly can present difficult situations that can break your spirit. At those point, it's a strong unmovable faith that sees the impossible that can take you through. It is the faith that calls things that are not as if they were.

Plutarch said "the measure of a man is the way he bears up under misfortune. I may be wounded but I am not slain. I shall lay me down and bleed awhile, but I will rise again and fight again!"

Never focus on difficulties, but the solution. Focus on your destination, re-affirm your dream, and be willing to make tough decisions.

Just as the law of gravity is constant but airplanes still overcome it under certain principles. Difficulties are constants in life and under certain principles, you can overcome them.

I CAN'T CHANGE

The first step toward change is awareness. The second is acceptance.

ANONYMOUS

So we have dealt with excuses on various levels for the past 24 days and there's a huge possibility that you might think it's too late to change.

You might be saying words like, "this is who I am", or "this is my personality." You might even be emphasizing on certain areas of your temperament as an excuse: "I am a sanguine, I am a phlegmatic, I am a choleric or I am a melancholy."

Well, it all sounds interesting but if they are inhibiting your personal growth, then you have to deal with it. The truth is that your default makeup gives room for change.

For example, every smartphone comes with a default setting but you can customize those settings to your advantage as a user. Different users will have different preferred settings. Well, I am not comparing you to a smartphone. The point here is that your default make up can be optimized for maximum impact.

Whatever you claim to be, were things you picked up while growing from the environment. Even though some might be genetic doesn't mean that you can't unlearn them.

Change is first a decision before a process. Discover the habits that you know act as a setback and trace it to a belief that produces that habit. It's the belief system you should deal with and the habit will be handled.

Whenever you resist the possibility of change, you deny yourself access into success and personal fulfillment. Change process can be easy when you know how it operates. Change begins in the mind. The quality of your life is a reflection of the quality of your thinking.

So, if you want to change the occurrences in your life, change your thought pattern. Think big, think positive, think whatsoever you desire and think success. When you do that constantly over time, it becomes a dominant process that will naturally occur in your life.

The things you believe control your actions. When you believe that you can't adapt to change, your mind will create all sort of reasons and proofs. Your input determines your output. It's the garbage in, garbage out principle.

I WANT TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT. I WANT TO BE ORIGINAL

There is no such thing as a new idea. It is impossible. We simply take a lot fold ideas and put them into a sort of mental kaleidoscope.

MARK TWAIN

The idea of originality can be delusional sometimes. So if you are like the old me that often discard a lot of ideas because I thought they were not original enough, wake up now.

There's really no such thing as originality. In other words, what we call *an original idea* is simply a unique combination of existing concepts. Well, since we don't have another word for it, let's just stick to 'originality' as it were.

As I noted, the originality comes from the unique combination which is a function of your purpose, passion, vision, and convictions.

Have you ever had an impulse of Inspiration that give you the chills, only to research and find out someone somewhere, is doing something similar or even exactly the same?

On my own end, I had a lot of them. The differential factor ultimately comes down to your personality, story and vision. So what you should focus on is "why should I take this up?" and "How will it work for me?"

This is another type of what I call *the perfectionist syndrome*. Hence, the obsession to stand out eventually makes you non-existent. You know, every morning you make positive confessions, "I am unique, I am a difference maker, and I have a special purpose."

Seriously, they are awesome! However, please do something! This is definitely not a license to go begin duplicating the intellectual property of another person. You are on your own on that one. Please get the point.

The whole concept of uniqueness has made a lot of people take their ideas lightly. I believe ideas have their own life force, if it comes and you mess with it for some time, it jumps on someone else.

I am a strong believer in the concept of individuality. I know that each one of us have unique characteristics that distinguishes us from others. Just as every standard company have a unique corporate identity, you have a unique personal identity.

However, I have also observed situations where someone gets so obsessed with their individuality that they discredit others. They end up most times with little or no influence not because they don't have the *brains* but because of the *thinking behind the brains*.

I was a typical example. I was too critical about a lot of people and a lot of things. You see, your individuality doesn't produce the result, rather, it's the thinking behind the individuality.

There are many people out there that can equally produce the result you can produce. The only difference will be your personality touch. Don't get too full of yourself. Humble yourself and get started on something worthwhile today.

See your individuality as a fingerprint and not as a hand. Every functional hand can hold a scepter but every hand will leave a different fingerprint.

IT'S NOT MY FAULT

You must take ownership and responsibility for where you are no matter how insignificant it seems.

POJU OYEMADE

With all we have covered for 26 days, there is this probability you might say: "It's not my fault." There are so many things you could blame.

Anyone who gets into the blame game always loses. That's the one game that all who participate are guaranteed of losing.

It's your life. So why place it on someone or something else? When you lay blames, this is what you are literally saying: "I don't really have control over my actions and my life."

So the situation can be likened to a puppet show. Anyone can pull your strings and determine your movement. My friend, stop blaming and complaining.

You might not have control of what happens to you. You might have little control over what happens around you, but you have total control over what goes on within you.

When you get engrossed in the blame syndrome, you get *mentally blind* to the solutions around you. However, each time you make a resolution to be responsible for the situation, you increase your sensitivity to recognize the options around you.

You need to maintain the discipline of responsibility. The more you blame, the more you empower your mind to always find someone to blame each time something happens to you.

Honestly, blaming is a symptom of cowardice. It's like you are not bold enough to face the problem, so you psychologically try to shift it unto someone or something else.

Actually, blaming makes you get angry unnecessarily. Brain Tracy hilariously said “people who develop the habit of automatically blaming often become angry at things. Blaming inanimate objects... become angry at doors that stall... swear at the tools they are using when they themselves made a mistake...get mad when their car doesn't start...If it doesn't work perfectly, then the thing must be to blame... They will often kick a car that they are mad at or a box they tripped over.”

It's quite interesting because it happens every day. I can also count several times I screamed at my phone or my computer. It appears to me that when you blame, it's a leak of emotion. The way to seal that leak and conceal them back is to take responsibility.

THE SOURCE

You cannot have a positive life and a negative mind.

JOYCE MEYER

For the past 27 days we have moved through a journey of debunking some major excuses that stand as a barrier between where you are and where you ought to be.

It would have been an effort in vain if I had only pointed out the excuses without tracing out the source (which I actually did). So let us dig more into this aspect.

Excuses are like symptoms. There is actually an ideology that produces it. Just like in medicine, a symptom is not a disease but actually an indicator that there is a disease or disorder. So we want to dig briefly into the roots.

The mind

It all begins in the mind. Your reality, which is the results you physically produce is a function of your thoughts. Which comes first between the camera and the picture?

Of course, the camera. Specifically the lens quality.

The better the lens, the better the picture quality produced. So if you want to improve on your personal reality (picture), the place to focus on is your mind (lens).

Be careful of what you listen to. Feed your mind with the exact things you would like to materialize in your life. The question for you today is; what do you feed your mind with?

Are you saturated with negative reports and stories of failure that you end up buying into those ideologies?

I often wonder why people find it easy to believe more that something would not work out. Personally, I plug myself daily to the Word of faith from the Bible daily. This is your life and you have just once to make it count.

You are what you think. If you give excuses, it's because your mind is constantly processing and producing excuses. The battle of life takes place in the mind. Anything we see is just an expression of the state of our mind.

Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Philippi “do not be anxious about anything...whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”

I see a great relationship in the sequence of those words. There is a link between your anxiety and your thought patterns. By giving them a template of what their minds should be filled with, their anxiety level can be well managed.

Stop fighting your battle with the wrong strategy. Stop trying to change your environment, spouse, job, country, etc. without having a right mental disposition.

The very thing you may be seeing as a problem, to another person is no problem at all.

Let me illustrate with a popular story from the bible. Moses was a very influential leader of Israel and had led them out of slavery in Egypt. God had told Moses he would give the Israelites a land of their own.

This particular day as they journeyed, Moses selected twelve leaders to go spy a particular land that God had promised to give them. When these leaders came back, they all testified to the richness, goodness and prosperity of the land with a little exception.

Ten of them had a negative report. They said “we saw giants and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight.” But two others, Caleb and Joshua said “we are well able to overcome them.”

They had similar experiences but gave different reports. The issue here was not about the presence of giants, it was that a group saw themselves as grasshoppers and were intimidated while another group (Joshua and Caleb) saw themselves defeating the giants.

In life, it’s not about the problems (giants) but your disposition towards them. Your mental disposition.

It’s your disposition that determines the strength of your opposition and not your position. Physically, their position was that in size they looked like grasshoppers, but the mental disposition of Caleb and Joshua reflected that they saw themselves also has conquerors.

There is so much embedded in you that is seeking for expression. Each day, I ask myself questions that will help me discover more about myself. I position myself in places where I can listen to people whose experiences create flames of courage in me. Strengthen and feed your mind correctly and you will see how the results you produce will be amazingly awesome.

THE GUARDIAN

Guard your heart with all diligence, for out of it flows the issue of life.

KING SOLOMON

So in the last chapter, I asked which comes first between the camera and the picture produced. I chose the camera because that's what captures the image. It can be likened to the mind and reality.

Let's try again; which is more important? The Camera, or the one who wields it (photographer)?

Of course, the photographer. Even the best camera in the world in the hands of an amateur would not produce the best result it is capable of.

This can be likened to personal leadership. Your mind is so powerful. It can be your greatest tool if you develop the capacity. The results you produce (personal reality), is highly dependent on how you handle the information that comes into your mind.

The amazing things about humans is that we can be conscious of our thoughts. We have the ability to think about our very thought process. Have you ever had two or more conversation going on in your head about an issue? And at the same time trying to decide which to go with? That's an example.

You are the guardian. You determine what comes in and what stays. Compare your mind to the CPU of a computer that processes

information. The mechanism is garbage-in, garbage-out.

Likewise, whatever information you receive and accommodate, will ultimately become the reality you produce. Make a conscious effort to pay more attention to what flows in and out. Make it a daily practice.

In the last chapter, I made mention of Joshua and Caleb's disposition in comparison with ten others. In that scenario, these two men could be referred to as a minority.

When the group of ten gave their report, the whole congregation of Israel that were numbered in hundreds of thousands began to cry and wail except Joshua, Caleb, Moses and Aaron (Moses Assistant). How can the report of ten men affect hundreds of thousands but doesn't change the disposition of very few men?

The answer is simple – they had their heart guarded. Can you imagine how intimidating it would have been for only two men to be saying something quite different from millions of people?

They whole camp of Israel even planned stoning Joshua and Caleb but they remained unmoved. They must have called them names and curse them, but it didn't make any difference to what they believed.

In the pursuit of your dream, the majority voice does not always count. Many people can cry about economic recession, financial crunch and hardship but doesn't mean that will also be your reality.

Your personal reality is fully anchored on what your mind is convinced about. It's your responsibility to guard your heart, your dream and vision from external noise, ridicule and embarrassment.

Joshua and Caleb had a deep understanding that not even the voice of an entire nation could shake them. How much are you convinced about the path you are treading? Some people are so double-minded

and full of doubt that they would veer off course at any slight thing. They appear to be busy but have no substantial result to back it up.

One of the ways to guard your heart is to strengthen the depth of your convictions. Have a thorough understanding of what you believe.

GO FOR IT

You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.

ZIG ZIGLAR

If you read between the lines, you will notice that the entire content of this book can be anchored on two words – fear and action.

Fears at different levels can stop us from fully living our dreams and maximizing our potential. It has been a constant boogey man from time immemorial. The major antidote to defeat fear is to take the initiative. Take action.

I remember when I was very young, during the Harmattan seasons, I am always reluctant to go into the bathroom and prepare for school. I would stand still in the bathroom for minutes staring at the bucket of water beside me.

There was this particular day, as usual, I was scared of allowing the cold water touch my body. Unknowingly to me, my mum had been watching me waste time. Before I could say Jack Robinson, there was a huge splash of water on my body. I screamed for few seconds and that was all. My fear had been defeated and I was empowered to take my bath and get set for school.

What you also need might just be a little splash of action and everything ahead of you will begin to align. Take a step of faith and live your dreams because *you only live once* (YOLO). It's a crime against

yourself and humanity to die without fully maximizing your potential and emptying your virtue on earth.

It's has been an amazing journey from the first day of this series. So the last 29 days was used to debunk major excuses we hold on to in life. I actually turned the table around and showed that you have the capacity to birth the results you desire.

So what's the key take away? Well, I would crave your indulgence that at any point you are making decisions in your life, always test your intentions to make sure that the so called *practicality* or *reality* are not mental limitations in form of excuses.

This is simply because whatever your mind cannot envision with great conviction, you cannot produce. Every single thing is created twice - first in the mind, then in reality. I want to believe you have used the information I have shared so far to identify what you need to let go.

Also I believe you should have mapped out the things you need to do to reach your goal. Don't let this be another book you read and nod your head. Get to work and deliberately move towards the goal.

LEAD YOUR LIFE

AS WRITTEN IN 2016

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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