

The Journey

Chronicles of a Young Lady

ELIZABETH TOLULOPE EGBENIYI



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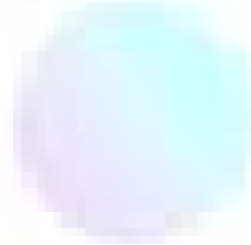
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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the Triune God who has been my help from ages past.



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To all my friends: Special thanks to you all for being there at all times. Thanks for being my prayer partners and confidants.

To the B.U.D Family: Thanks for being the best sisters to me.

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To everyone reading this book, I say a very big thank you. May you be blessed beyond measure as you read through the pages of this book. You're greatly loved.

PREFACE

I've known Lizzy for about five years now; you might wonder why I'm smiling.

Okay, I'd tell you this, when we first met then, it felt like she was my younger sister, because I was in my final year then, while she just got admitted to the university.

Looking back, I'm grateful to God to be one of the first people she met in the University of Ibadan, and now, I'm one of the first people who will introduce you to one of her first books here on earth.

Okay, let's do a serious and proper introduction, shall we??

In this lovely piece of literature in your hands, tab, phone, view (whatever the case may be), is the chronicles of a young lady who has gained quite a lot in her over two decades of purposeful living here on earth.

Why won't you want to stick to her views, incase you don't know, she graduated as the best student in the Department of Botany, University of Ibadan, which is by no means an easy feat.

So, dive right into enjoying the lovely delicacy she has for you.

Salt Ashibuogwu

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*CHAPTER 1**LET GOD DRIVE THE BUS!*

While growing up, I had phobia for cars. I usually imagined how one “non-living thing” could kill a living being.

The bad roads in Nigeria made it worse. I just hated to travel because of the bad roads.

There was a particular day I was travelling with my friend back home. The bus got full and the driver tried to get the bus moving on the road but it was as if the bus was tilting to the other side.

My friend and I were sitting at the front seat with the driver.

I was really afraid and started fidgeting. I clamped my hands and feet together as if I was the one in charge of the steering. I started imagining what would happen if the bus should slide back or turn over.

My friend wasn't bothered. She was just laughing at me. She told me the bus can never slide that the driver was in control.

Exactly!

The driver was the one driving not me. My fidgeting and clamping of hands wouldn't do anything even if the bus was to slide. Therefore, there was nothing much I could have done.

I had just trust the driver to do his job.

In the journey of life, we are just passengers while God is the driver.

He is the owner of life.

He is the owner of YOU.

He has all the power to drive to whatsoever direction He wills.

He can decide to either slow down or speed while driving.

He can decide to stop while driving.

Just let Him, never try to take over.

Have you ever been in a bus where the passengers were complaining about how slow the driver was driving but he didn't care?

Just like that, no matter the shouts & talks, God wouldn't bulge. He is the driver and we should simply let Him do His work.

As a student that has dutifully prepared for exams, why do you resort to malpractice if really you want God to fully be in charge?

As a bachelor/spinster praying for direction in marriage, why do you tend to choose carnally if really you want to be submissive to God's will?

You need to be rich, yes, but must you be involved in dubious act to get rich?

The simple truth is this – allow God fully into the bus of our life.

We need to stop dragging the position of being the driver with Him.

A bus can never have more than one driver. It can only have one.

I've learnt over and over again to let God be in charge of my life.

There are a lot of times I've tried to do things my own way but God constantly reminded me to allow Him be in charge.

"God has taken charge; from now on he has the last word." - **Psalms 22:28**
(MSG)

*CHAPTER 2**WHERE IS YOUR JOURNAL?*

One of the major things I love doing is writing down my thoughts, plans, progresses made, the failures and successes recorded, bad and good times, promises of God among so many other.

Recently, I was going through the books I used during my undergraduate days when I stumbled on a particular book. The book contains a personal interview I did for myself. I picked the book, sat comfortably and began to read through. I was smiling as I was reading. I never believed I wrote something of such. What I read was written about 4 years ago but reading through again made me reflect on what has happened between that period and now.

I have a lot of books that contain several things I wrote of which some of them are funny though.

Early this year as well, I wrote down the goals I must achieve in every aspects of my life.

I check my journal occasionally to know and measure my progress. I achieved some goals but I lagged behind in some of them.

But what's the essence of writing and writing?

Writing has a way of helping you have a check on yourself. When you read through what you've once written, you'll be able to evaluate your progress.

There a lot of things I penned down that could have easily been forgotten if I had nothing to remind me of them.

I'll always encourage everyone around me to have a journal. Technology has also made it easy that you can have online journals.

God gave you some promises, write them down and keep reminding Him of them.

You failed in a particular project, write it down. Write down what caused the failures and how you can avoid such.

You have inspiration on some topics to write on, why don't you pen them down?

Have a daily written record of your life's experiences and observations; it's one of the catalysts of growth.

You have plans and visions in mind – well, that's good, but please, write them down.

“Then, the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it.” - Habakkuk 2:2 (KJV)

*CHAPTER 3**WHAT IS YOUR PASSION?*

All glory to God Almighty for making me who I am today. Just like Paul said, I am who I am by the grace of God.

Exactly two weeks ago, I did my convocation in which I graduated from the University of Ibadan as a Botanist.

Some people might want to ask me "Who is a Botanist?"

A botanist is a plant scientist.

Some years back, on a particular afternoon, I was having lunch with my family when my dad asked me about the course I'd love to study. Immediately, I said I'd love to study Human Nutrition or Food Technology simply because I've loved anything pertaining to food.

"How will someone say Indomie can cause cancer", I wondered.

Then, I used to think I need to study a food related course so that I'd know more about the chemistry of food and how it functions in the body.

That was my ideology about the courses not knowing there were more to that.

On that particular day, my dad jokingly asked why I wanted to study such a course.

"Who cooked this Okro soup? Are you not the one? Then, why will you want to study Human nutrition or Food Technology?" he asked with a wide grin on his face.

That day, I felt that Human Nutrition or Food Technology is all about learning how to cook. How will I go to school to learn how to cook when my mum had done justice to that already by teaching me a whole lot?

That was how the thought of studying Human Nutrition or Food Technology began to fade away.

The next question then popped up, "If I don't study Human nutrition or Food Technology, what will I study then?"

Nothing but Medicine and Surgery came to mind.

Every blessed person I knew from when I was little wanted me to study Medicine and surgery.

Some will say "Your parents are both Nurses, it'll be a blessing if their daughter becomes a medical doctor"

While others will be like, "Oh! Medicine is such a professional course with great prestige. You won't even be looking for job when you graduate"

I still remember hearing things like, "You're such a brilliant girl; Medicine is just the best course for you".

Well, since I had no other set of counselors; I had no option but to pick Medicine and Surgery.

I wouldn't say I don't like the course. I liked it simply because it is such a respected course but not that I had passion for it.

In the year 2015, I wrote University of Ibadan Post UTME and guess what? I got way below the cut off mark for medicine.

I was sad though.

I had no option but to change my course. I started the process of changing my course to Human Nutrition but it was too late.

I met a lecturer and he said the only option he can guarantee me is an Agricultural course.

I checked through the lists of available courses and I decided to change to Chemistry and Industrial Chemistry.

Alas, when the admission list came out, I was offered admission to study Botany.

I wept.

"How will I study Botany? What is the course all about? Will I have to take another Jamb?" all these questions made me weep the more.

At the long run, I started my study and I began to fall in love with the course.

My parents, siblings and a very dear uncle of mine that I call daddy were some of the few people that encouraged me while majority spoke against the course.

There are a whole lot of lessons that I've learnt over the years while studying Botany that I'd love to share:

1) Don't give up on your passion.

Even though I've fallen in love with Botany, I still love anything related to nutrition. But how can I achieve my aim? Will I have to go back for another degree course in Nutrition?

Not too long ago, I was still lamenting to a friend of how I'd have loved to study Nutrition.

But his reply opened my eyes and gave me new hopes.

"You can take online courses anytime, just keep the passion growing. Check out sites like University of people, Coursera, Alison and Yale." he said.

I didn't stop there. I told my small daddy and he also gave me more sites from which I can do online courses and get certified. Some are completely free while some require paying some amount of money.

That means my dream of being a nutritionist can still be fulfilled. It gives me a surge of excitement every time I think about it.

Your own story might not be exactly like mine. However, the fact that you didn't get what you wanted initially does not mean you still can't pursue what you want.

If you have passion and focus, you can still achieve what you want. There are more than a million ways to achieving what you want.

All you just need to do is look out for those ways.

2) What you have might be a blessing in disguise.

Studying Botany has been a blessing in disguise for me. If I haven't studied Botany, I probably wouldn't have thought of blogging. I started blogging when I decided to start writing about plants. As time went by, I started other forms of writing as well.

It made me find passion in writing.

I started participating in online classes that help sharpened my writing skills.

Dear one, when things are not going your own way, don't be sad. This is because the new way God is taking you through might be the one that will take you to your promised land.

3) When I started Botany, a lot of people said so many things that made me cry. I was not my normal self at that point. I didn't have the boldness to tell anyone the course I was studying. I was afraid of the future because of what people said.

But I thank God for using some people to encourage me.

Dear ones, do not let the words of anyone hinder you from doing what you ought to do. Everyone has his/her life to live.

People will always talk whether you're doing good or not.

Whatever your hands finds doing, do with all your might. Be the best in whatever you do so that those that once despise what you do will come back to appreciate what you do.

4) Finally, I'll love to say this to dear parents, proprietors and proprietresses, uncles and aunts, family and church members, let's know that no child is exactly the same like the other. Let's stop forcing children to study what is against their wish or beyond their abilities or capabilities.

Note: The fact that that child is very brilliant doesn't automatically mean she/he should be a medical doctor, lawyer, engineer or accountant.

The fact that the father is a lawyer doesn't means the child should be a lawyer.

Let's be Spirit guided.

Let that child state what interests him/her.

Let that child do what will bring out the best in him/her.

Let that child do what he will be happy about.

Let that child do what he/she is passionate about.

Let that child do what he/she is proud of.

Also, let there be proper sensitization in the various schools. Let students know of the various courses available and the prospects.

Let's stop making it seem as if only medical doctors, lawyers or accountants will make it in life.

Also **to the students**, pursue what you want.

If you want any course but you couldn't get it, try again and again.

If it is medicine you want to study but your performance is poor, put in more efforts. Study hard and you'll get it.

But if it's not what you want, stop pressuring yourself.

And if you've unfortunately found yourself studying a course that wasn't really your choice, I'll advice you try to adjust to it. But if you can't cope, stop before it's too late.

Finally, don't ever settle for anything just because you want to compete with your mates or because you don't want to stay at home for too long.

And never forget the place of interest. Interest in that course will determine how well you will finish.

Dear one, "**Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.**" - Ecclesiastes 9:10 (KJV)

*CHAPTER 4**ARE YOU DEPRESSED?*

Many a times, we experience various blows of life that disrupt our emotional and mental well-being.

As we all know that emotional part of a man deals majorly with his emotions while mental part deals with the mind.

My emotions had been toiled with severally in the past and my mind – hmm! It's been drifted apart hereby leading to depression.

At cradle, I saw life being all rosy. I enjoyed the comfort of my home so much and I loved everybody around me.

I used to believe there were no challenges in life, and that everyone could always get what he/she wanted.

My perspective to life changed when I began to experience betrayals, rejections & heartbreaks.

The first experience that left me heartbroken happened in my primary school days. A classmate lied against me which caused the headmaster to discipline me so much. I cried profusely and felt the end of the world should come.

Fast forward to secondary school, I experienced several heartbreaks, betrayals and break ups both with guys and girls.

Some of my female friends rejected me.

Some lied against me.

Some even molested me.

All these killed my self-confidence. I was losing my mind and couldn't get hold of myself anymore.

Then, at the beginning of senior secondary school, I ventured into dating relationships. It all seemed to start well only for the relationship to hit a crash.

I wish I had known fully well that it was too early for me to venture into dating.

It was an experience that almost left me empty.

There was a particular day after the breakup incidence when I was frying meat in the kitchen and right before me, the meats were getting burnt and I never knew. Mum had to come into the kitchen and I wasn't aware of her presence as well.

I couldn't explain what I was going through.

Other relationship stories came up as well after then.

As at that point, I did things irrationally.

Well, I have a long story which I won't be able to dive into at this point.

Nevertheless, the important thing I'm grateful for is my ability to get over emotional and mental depression.

Feelings associated with depression include Weariness, Inferiority complex, Low Self Esteem, Sadness, Guilt, Moodiness, Anger, Hatred, Withdrawal, Loss of interest and Dejection.

All these characterized my life until I decided to take the bull by the horn. I will love to share 7 major things that helped in getting over being depressed emotionally and mentally.

1) **Getting over the Past:** The first thing to do in overcoming mental and emotional depression is getting over the past. You shouldn't allow your past to determine your future. Only bring out lessons from the past to help you successfully attain the best in the future.

It's difficult to move forward if one keeps brooding over what had happened. Of course, it might not be easy to forget but it is still achievable with much discipline.

As best as you can; let go and forget the past. The past is gone and gone forever; you only have the present and future to invest in.

2) **Be Accountable:** One of the causes of my emotional depression was being overly secretive. I was passing through challenges but couldn't open up to anyone not even to my parents.

Many things kept eating me up and I was getting drowned in depression day by day. This was simply because I felt every human being is the same and wicked.

Of course, this is not so. As time went on, I found people (goodly, godly and trustworthy) I could share my challenges with and they all helped me out.

I can boldly say God gave me divinely ordained mentors that helped me through.

To overcome that depression you are going through, speak out and be accountable to someone.

You will sure do yourself good by doing that.

3) **Develop Yourself:** Yes, this is very crucial. This begins with being you.

Be purposeful. Set boundaries. Stand up for your values. Be intentional about being happy.

Motivate and encourage yourself in the Lord.

Don't be deterred. Refuse to be disturbed. Identify your abilities and work on them.

4) **Get Busy:** The popular adage says "the idle hand is the devil's workshop". This applies to your emotional and mental health as well. When you are just in position thinking over and over on what you had experienced, you get weakened day by day.

The thoughts of the past keep flying across your mind frequently.

Rather than allow that, why don't you get busy with something at each passing moments.

What can you do to get busy?

You can learn a trade.

Work on your talents and skills. Do you know how to draw? Please get busy with drawing. Do you know how to sing? Then, why not compose songs?

Also,

Go for seminars.

Read books (spiritual, educational, motivational, etc).

Listen to godly and inspirational music.

Move with likeminded people.

Find purpose and fulfil purpose.

5) **Learn to Forgive:** No matter who or what might be behind your emotional instability or mental depression, learn to forgive.

Forgive those who in one way or the other are involved in your predicament.

This will help you get healed easily and faster as well.

And most importantly, learn to forgive yourself.

You might have probably made a mistake as a result of your own carelessness, ignorance or childishness which landed you in depression, still forgive yourself.

Do not condemn yourself forever.

I cried so much for the things I foolishly said or did. There are times I feel like beating myself. Later on, I discovered I do not need such again. I only have to forgive myself and move on.

6) **Be loving and Lovable:** As much as you can, express great amount of love to other people.

Inspire love. Be generous.

Show a little bit of love and kindness.

Wear a smile always.

7) **Involve God:** All aforementioned points wouldn't work if you do not involve God.

I tried to help myself out trying various methods but all kept being futile until I involved God.

Trust me; it wouldn't be easy for you getting over the past without God's help. And invariably, without getting over the past, you won't be strong enough to develop yourself. Neither will you be able to find purpose talk less of being able to forgive and show love.

In short, God is over everything.

He knows our past and is ready to help us have a better future.

Until I realise God's love for me, I kept on wallowing in depression, guilt and self pity.

Have a walking and working relationship with God.

Allow Him to work on you and heal your wounds.

Let Him be the centre of your life.

I will love to add this: Find Purpose before you find a Life Partner.

You can sure be emotionally stable and mentally sound.

"He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds" - Psalms 147:3 (KJV)

CHAPTER 5

ARE YOU STILL DREAMING?

Dream but don't dream forever.

At every point in life, I've always dreamt about one thing or the other and my dreams are not small at all.

I always have biiiiiiig dreams.

Yes, it's good to dream. But dreaming without waking up to the reality of doing the needful is what very wrong.

I've always dreamt to be a world class baker but will I become one if I don't take a step by learning?

I've been dreaming of learning how to bake for years but 2019 happens to be a year of awakening.

Suggestions came from several angles as usual on why I shouldn't learn baking but I said NO.

You can dream the whole year but until you wake up to do something, you'll just keep dreaming.

You've been dreaming of distinction?

Wake up and start reading your books.

You've been dreaming of walking great dimensions in the Spirit?

Wake up from your dream and do the needful.

You've been dreaming of being the richest woman in the whole world?

Wake up and start working on your financial freedom.

Whatever dream you've been having, wake up and bring your dream to fruition.



CHAPTER 6

LEARN TO NETWORK

Do you know there's nothing you want to do in life that someone hasn't done before or is currently doing?

The only thing is that everyone has different approach to the same thing.

But to go far, you need to network with people of same goals.

One of the means by which you can network is through Social Media.

This year, I've learnt that social media is far beyond chatting. There's more to chatting which is networking.

There are different social media platforms where one can network.

After learning how to bake, I started following a lot of experienced bakers on Instagram, for instance, naija bakers.

What about whatshapp and Facebook?

I've connected to many people through these platforms that have greatly helped me spiritually, academically, career wise, etc

As much as you network, be guided as well.

There are lots of groups I exited while I joined serious minded ones.

What am I saying?

Network but do that wisely.

Watch inspirational movies on YouTube.

*CHAPTER 7**WHAT DO YOU READ?*

I've been a lover of novels for years. While in secondary school, I used to get into competition with my friends. I even read a novel of more than 200 pages in just a night before.

However, what I enjoyed most were romantic novels. I got so caught up in that web and it became worse.

The stories had great effects on me until I started learning to read more of books that matter.

It is indeed true that readers are leaders.

The very first spiritual book I read that ministered so much to me is "Holiness for ordinary people".

I can remember how I was forced to read that book by a brother.

As time went on, I discovered that if I wanted to be versatile and widen my horizon, I needed to read.

I started reading novels by Francine Rivers and Karen Kingsbury, spiritual books, motivational and inspirational books.

But most importantly, I started to read and study my Bible the more. That's the best book one can ever read.

Let's "study to shew ourselves approved" as the Bible clearly states.

Read the Bible.

Read Christian novels.

Read Christian literatures.

Read professional books related to your field.

Read books on purpose.

Read books on career.

Read books on emotional stability.

Read! Read!! Read!!!

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." - 2Timothy 2:15 (KJV)

*CHAPTER 8**ARE YOU A LONE RANGER?*

God did not create anyone a lone ranger. Going back to the early days of creation, God saw that it wasn't good for man to be alone; hence, He created Eve to be his helpmeet.

In the past years, especially in 2019, I've learnt that for me to grow and make progress, I must not be a lone ranger.

I need to acquaint myself with people.

To achieve great feats, I need people to hold my hands; hence, the need for family and friends.

I've made destiny friends that I'll forever be grateful for. At the same time, I also had to do away with some friends.

It's just a matter of putting checks and balances in place.

Have you been hurt before and you feel you can't trust anyone again?

Probably that's why you don't want to associate yourself with anyone and just be on your own?

Trust me, I've been there before. But simply cry out your hurt to God and tell him to direct your steps towards building divine friendship.

"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." - Proverbs 27:17 (KJV)

CHAPTER 9

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

So many situations have happened that made me realize that I'm my greatest cheerleader.

If I don't believe myself, who will?

If I've written myself off, who will then lift me up?

You have to be confident in yourself, encourage yourself and motivate yourself.

There were times I felt so dejected because of what people said.

Dear one, before anyone can accept you, you have to accept yourself.

1 Samuel 30:6 made us to understand that David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

I believe so much in myself simply because I know what God has said about me.

He has good plans for me.

I'm a success.

I'm beautiful.

I'm the righteousness of Christ.

My business flourishes.

I know I'll make it.

I'm not depressed.

I'm encouraged.

Wake up each day with a strong belief in yourself that you're great.

CHAPTER 10
LEARN TO SAY NO

I've come to learn that YES is not the answer to every question or order. This year, I said a lot of NO's to certain people, to the extent that some tagged me as a wicked person.

However, it isn't my fault. I can't just say YES to anything that will deprive me of my joy, make me lose my conscience or be a burden on me.

There were offers I said NO to.

There were suggestions I said NO to.

There were proposals I said NO to.

There were ideas I said NO to.

If Joseph didn't say NO to the offer of Portiphar's wife, he would have probably missed God's plans for his life

CONCLUSION

Thank you dear friend for reading.

I am sure you have learnt one thing or the other.

As you sojourn through this school of life, remember to let God drive the bus at all times. Write down your vision. Be passionate about what you do. Never sink into the pit of depression. Wake up to actualize your dreams. Don't forget to have a strong and goal oriented network. Read diligently. Don't be a lone ranger. Believe in yourself and never forget to say NO when necessary.

Now that I've shared with you some of the lessons I've learnt in the little course of my sojourning in this school called life. Go forth and inspire others...

THE JOURNEY CONTINUES.

I love feedbacks. Your questions, advice, suggestions, enquiries and all are welcome. Also, if you need someone to talk to, feel free to reach out to me!

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ABOUT THE BOOK

This book is a product of divine inspiration through the channel of the De-raconteur Writers' Club (DWC). The motivation and efforts of my DWC bestie in person of Ashibuogwu Salt made the book a reality.

This book is a compilation of nuggets I've gleaned so far from my sojourn in the school called life. As you read through the pages of this book, I hope you will be blessed, encouraged, strengthened and inspired.

Stay blessed!

Xoxo

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elizabeth Tolulope Egbeniyi, popularly known by friends as goldenqueenet or botapreneur is a writer and blogger who sees writing as a tool to reach out to many far and near.

She's a lover of teenagers. She aims at building refined and rebranded golden (godly, outstanding, laudable daring, exceptional and noble) teenagers.

She is the founder at Golden Teens Corner, a platform dedicated to teenagers development and empowerment.

You can check out <https://www.goldenteenscorner.wordpress.com> for more info.

She is a graduate of Botany from the prestigious University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria. She loves to write about plants and various natural products that can improve health and general body upkeep.

She is a baker. She is a volunteer on different platforms. She blogs at www.botapreneur.com

She loves to put smile on peoples' faces, including you.