



LIFELONG LEARNING A SEARCH FOR MEANING

I have chosen to speak on Lifelong Learning: A life of continuous search for meaning.

At the onset we may need to probe the terms we will use and use again in this presentation for the sake of clarity. The key word in this topic is Learning. What is learning and what is the difference between Learning and Education? Are these synonymous terms?

For the purpose of this paper, I will state that Education is just one way of passing knowledge and skills. Education involves formal schooling to obtain knowledge and skills. Education is hierarchical. Learning is not. What do I mean by hierarchical? You receive diploma to certify you have accomplished a particular level and one level qualifies you to proceed to the next level, a parallel to Maslow's law of hierarchy of needs.

Learning, however, takes place in all places, and all times, not necessarily within the four walls of a classroom or at the feet of a professor. And that is what our topic today is about "Learning, lifelong learning" and the proposal of this paper is that lifelong learning is an endless search for meaning.

Education and Learning. Education is essentially classroom learning. It is a systemized way of learning obtained in schools, colleges, and universities.

- Education is obtained within the four walls of a classroom and at the feet of a professor even if the classroom is a workshop and virtual.
- It is about earning credentials. As children we are sent to an elementary school. You begin perhaps in kindergarten and proceed to primary, then secondary and then college or university
- It is hierarchical, one level followed by another, from a lower level to the next higher level rather like Maslow's hierarchy

of needs. Maslow's hierarchy of needs comprises of a five-tier model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid.

- As is so commonly known, Maslow's hierarchy ranges from the bottom of the need as Basic Needs with the apex of the pyramid the need for inner fulfilment
- Through one level of education, you get proof that you have mastered some skills for which you obtain credentials. The credentials testify to the kind of skills you have acquired which in turn indicates the jobs or tasks you are certified to be capable of doing. Then you move to the next level of education, etc.
- The learning style is formal. We are taught by teachers. Education is not self-induction. To obtain education, you have to have a teacher who follows a curriculum of instruction.
- If you need to change your profession, you have to have the required certificate that meets the new profession.
- For example, when my wife first came to join me in this country to live, she first attended a professional school to learn to use the computer which required her also to learn typing. That was in Atlanta. Later she came to New York, and to get a job she attended a short training course and got certified as a Security Officer even though she was a practicing medical doctor in Nigeria. Happily, she didn't have to work as a security officer, much to my relief.
- Later she trained to become a proof reader and worked with that certification for a number of years in New York. I also joined her in that trade when we had enough fund for me to obtain my own training.
- Again, later she had to go back to college so that she could go back to the health sector to work, since outside of that she was

Dr. Andrew Adebisi Omotoso



like a fish out of water. That meant going back to the University for an M.PH degree. Then she was hired by a research team in the field of health education in Columbia.

- Later still, when she had to go to South Africa as a Missionary, she had to study for and obtain the certification required by South Africa to practice Medicine which she was able to obtain in order to practice as a Doctor in South Africa. She is still so certified today.
- My own pathway followed a similar path. I got a bachelor's degree university of London in 1965, worked quite a while and went back to College in Columbia university here for a master's and later a doctoral degree.
- For a different reason many students in Nigeria have become "Professional students," doing one degree after another in the hope rather than in the belief that the latest will land them a job, a goal that for many remain a mirage. acquiring one degree after another in the hope of getting a job!
- Seeing that my las, in this sense, education can be a lifelong affair. But this does not equate to lifelong learning.

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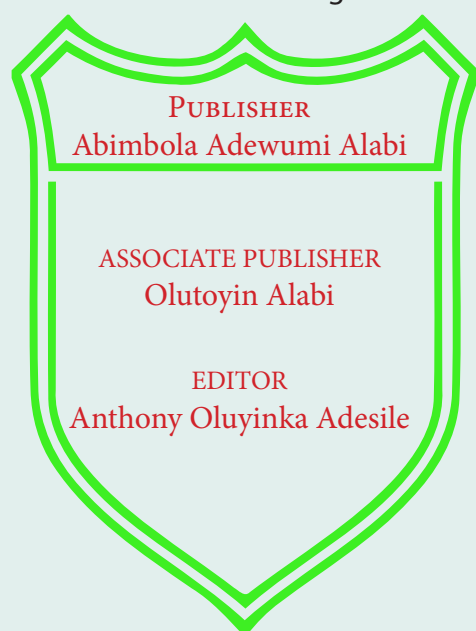
IN THIS EDITION:

LIFELONG LEARNING A SEARCH FOR MEANING
STRESS MANAGEMENT
THANKSGIVING

Welcome to Panoplia.

The mission of Panoplia is to help believers develop a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. It emphasises spiritual growth and leadership.

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What is learning?

- Unlike education, Learning comes **not** from teachers but from *experience*. While Education belongs to the formal sector, Learning belongs to the informal sector.
- Learning is not just about memorizing and regurgitation of information. It is about knowledge and values, and it is something we do throughout our lives. It is an ongoing process and that is why learning is a lifelong matter.
- In summary, the purpose of learning is personal development, to achieve personal fulfillment – which is indeed Maslow’s apex need of man in life. No wonder the common parlance: Experience is the best teacher.

Let me highlight some key differences between Education and Learning. Certainly, both education and learning are about acquisition of knowledge.

- In Education we acquire knowledge from teachers in classrooms, but in learning, we acquire knowledge through experience and that’s where the parlance ‘Experience is the best Teacher’, comes from.
- Education, as stated earlier, is hierarchical and age driven whereas learning starts with birth and continues all our lives. Learning is self-education propelled by curiosity and desire to know.
- To drive this point home, let me share here research findings for my second doctoral dissertation. The research explored a theory called “Attachment Theory”.

Attachment Theory

- The Attachment Theory was developed by Bowlby, the British Psychologist and Psychiatrist from his observations of the development of a close relationship between a child and its mother or caregiver, otherwise called attachment figure (AF). His observations of the nature of the child’s ties with its caregiver, led to the finding that there is “a bond”, between a child and its caregiver, that enables the child to feel secure when the caregiver is close by. The child feels insecure when the caregiver is not within reach or within sight. This feeling of security of the child when the mother or caregiver is within proximity is what Bowlby defines as “attachment.”
- Such an attachment may be ‘secure’ or ‘insecure’. Bowlby propounded that the nature of that early relationship between a child and its caregiver serves as the model of all other social relationships throughout a person’s life. Infants are attached to their caregivers not because caregivers feed them, but because caregivers “trigger inborn disposition to seek closeness with a protective other”. This proves a major difference between education and learning.
- What does this mean in essence? That learning is essentially an individual experience that gives rise to behavioral changes.
- It can be said that learning is essentially experiential like the self-discovery by the baby in **Bowlby’s theory of attachment**.

Lifelong Education.

What we have discussed so far is lifelong education. And we have seen that we do through education assemble a string of degrees and certificates showing a whole lot of skills and capabilities. The general expectation is that an educated society is a civilized community. A civilized community, we expect, will be a democratic community, well governed, living at peace with one another. *But the equation does not balance*.

If education leads to a blissful society, Nigeria, for instance, should be number one in Africa. It is the richest country in Africa, rich in human and material resources but the citizens are suffering extreme poverty and lawlessness. All of those degrees, all of that education has not helped.

Consider for instance our own Olayinka Herbert Macaulay, the grandson of the famous Samuel Ajayi Crowther, the translator of the Holy Bible into Yoruba whose Library formed the nucleus of the University of Ibadan library.

Consider for instance The world renown biologist who discovered the cause of the Guinea worm disease ‘*onabamiroi agoiwoyensis*’ was professor Onabamiro from Ago Iwoye Nigeria. And I can follow with a string of world renown scholars from Nigeria. Plenty of education but paucity of learning. So, we may aptly apply the famous words of Talleyrand for the Bourbon kings of France to Nigeria’s educated leaders “They have learnt nothing and forgotten nothing.”

PRAYER PUPS BY JEFFREY SMITH



IT'S A NEW YEAR AND A NEW OPPORTUNITY TO GROW AS A CHRISTIAN.

At independence in 1960, Nigeria's leaders believed that education (increasing the number of people with university degrees), was the answer for national development. That was why the government embarked upon expanding higher education, universities, polytechnics, etc. It must be pointed out however that expansion of higher education was not limited to Nigeria. As Windolf (1992), had noted, this was really a world trend.

As Omotoso (2009) noted "the number of graduates from the higher education sector was increasing by leaps and bounds in Nigeria, the infrastructural services that should promote the development of the economy, did not improve and were actually deteriorating from the standard left behind by colonial masters." All of a sudden, the groundnut pyramids and the cocoa and palm oil plantations, the erstwhile foreign exchange earners for the country disappeared. And Nigeria became one of the poorest nations of the world, while the country's leaders make up a significant number of the richest in the world.

From 1968-1971, I was a radio journalist, doing Newstalk on national and international themes Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation, NBC. I found in my research then, that 1 out of 6 university graduates in Africa south of the Sahara was a Nigerian. However, this did not reflect positively on good governance nor economic advancement. ***We have many certificates to show how educated we are, but what have we learnt?***

"Alarmed by the level of decay of the nation's infrastructure, in spite of the boom in Higher education, the Muritala/Obasanjo military regime 1975-1976 determined that there was definitely Something wrong with the university system and identified a cure." The wrong was that too much emphasis was being paid to university level education, instead of middle level technical training. With characteristic military dispatch they moved to solve the problem by signing contracts with the governments of many European countries and with many states in the US, to train scores of technicians for Nigeria. At the same time several technical colleges were established on ground named Colleges of Technology ... with a few federal universities of Technology, and Agriculture". Omotoso: p 277.

They came back with a lot of diplomas but the "telephones remained an object of frustration, the taps of water remained dry, and the roads became hardly motorable", Omotoso 2009 and remain so or worse even now. A whole lot of financial investment. *A whole lot of diploma returns on investment but what did we learn?*

Education and the College curriculum

For quite a while, College Curriculum experts had recognized that a utilitarian concept of education would not real learning. The utilitarian concept focused education on the Man as just mainly rational to be educated to become efficient performers of functions. This utilitarian concept of Education can only lead to the development of AI to replace Man, which in fact is happening now.

Originally University Education was Liberal arts designed to discipline the mind. Each subject was called a "discipline". The utilitarian concept took over later. The effect is that Higher education is to produce student to satisfy the market place. Gone was the notion of 'Art for Art's sake.'

The curriculum experts in Europe and America tried to rectify this situation by introducing the liberal arts curriculum into all degree programs to bring into the learning activity some measure of integration, to create *meaning*. A lip service attention was feverishly

followed by Nigeria's universities and made fun of by students. This has been attempt to create meaning in the student's learning experience. Other innovations included interdisciplinary Studies another genuine attempt to combine multiple academic disciplines into one activity along the lines of the earth breaking study by Philip H. Phenix in *Realms of Meaning*. 1964. A more recent at searching for meaning through the formal educational process is Jack Mezirow's *Transformative Learning*. The theory by Jack Mezirow of Teachers College Columbia University is based on the finding that 'adult "involves taking the very things we believed and thought as a child, and letting critical reflection and teaching impact the transformation to what we should believe and understand now"

The confluence of authorities so far call our attention to what Paulo Freire had "preached" in his Pedagogy of the Oppressed, that "the world and human beings do not exist apart from each other.....education can no longer be treated as an exhibition of technical items and skills laid out for students to choose as they want". (Omotoso:2009). That means in terms of shared "praxis", there is a "dialectic" between individual wellbeing and the common good. This is what brings *meaning* to life.

Human nature and the need for Meaning.

The goal of education is to help the individual to develop his or her potential to become the best he can be. Those who are engaged in that enterprise are experts in different subject areas and each professor wishes the student to become an expert in his or her area. The acknowledged duty of the Professor as it was with the Rabbis of old and Chie Rabi, Jesus Christ, is to reproduce himself.

But the best a student can become is not just one area of knowledge. It is in all areas of the total person. The amelioration brought by General education is the introduction of integration by way of General studies. Again, even in a particular subject areas an attempt is made to identify similarities in the apparently different areas of knowledge. It is an attempt to bring *meaning* to the apparently different realms of study.

Phoenix 1964, p28 has done a wonderful work of categorizing all educational disciplines into groups that bring meaning into apparently disparate areas of knowledge so as to bring a sense of meaning.



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1. *Symbolics* comprising of ordinary language, mathematics, non-discursive symbolic forms
2. *Empirics* comprising of Physical sciences, life sciences, psychology, social sciences.
3. *Aesthetics* comprising of music, visual arts, movement arts
4. Synnoetics, comprising of philosophy, literature, religion
5. *Ethics* comprising of all areas of ethical and moral concerns
6. *Synoptics* comprising of history, religion philosophy.

This very helpful analysis helps the teacher and the student to lay emphasis on the differences but similarities as a way to facilitate *meaning* in teaching and learning. It helps the teacher/parent to help a child to fight phobia when Math is presented as just a language or when it is made known that the Doctor is in a way an artist and the commonality is seen between Music and Mathematics.

But what is this thing about MEANING and what makes it so critically important?

The Educator, and that includes parents need to know that human nature is a “complex of *meanings*” and that there are enemies of *meaning*. Let us discuss briefly the pervasive threat of meaninglessness of life in today’s world:

In practical terms this means that more and more people have lost hope and are losing hope every day. That is why there is a rising case of suicide. The one who commits suicide has determined that his life has no meaning. Anxiety fills the air today what with wickedness of humankind to another person that we can all see all around the world. There are some happenings that no one living on earth now would say he or she has ever experienced before. And I am not speaking only of Coronavirus and its unstoppable mutations still going on:

1. When I was growing up, if a robber running away from the police runs into a place of worship, that was the end of the pursuit. THE Police would stay out, but not now
2. In a war, civilians and especially women were spared. Today even children including those at the point of coming out of the womb in hospital are intentionally targeted and bombed without remorse.
3. Today in the most “civilized” nation in the world the US, children are killing their parents and parents their children
4. Neighbors intentionally kill their neighbors with the littlest provocation, like ‘wrong parking’.
5. For instance, in America and in Australia, some Fire Men intentionally set fire to forests and homes. Upon being discovered to have done this dastardly act the young arsonist said he did it because he was bored and needed some thrill!
6. Then there is the random killings, in the cities of America, making it a risk to sit in relaxation in front of your home or go to malls and grocery stores.

I can go on, recalling what you already know, which constitute enemies of *meaning*. There is need to strive for *meaning*. There is need today more than ever before, for “*The Courage to Be*”, the title of the book by Paul Tillich (1952) p 30-31 in which he described the human condition as one of **inescapable anxiety**. He posited that inescapable anxiety on three dimensions.

- The ontological truth about the brevity of life.
- The fact that Man knows that he is a ‘transgressor’, that is, a sinner, Man is “aware of having violated moral law...” No matter what, Man carries with him an uneasy conscience”
- That Man is threatened by meaninglessness. He is beset with doubts that no arguments can dispel and he asks questions which he can find no answers and which only lead to “deeper perplexities and paradoxes”

I wish to propose to you ladies and gentlemen, brothers and sisters, Fellow Travelers in the Journey of Life, that no tweeting by masterful

curriculum experts can restore *meaning* to life. Dear listener, it does not matter if you are a Christian or not, if you claim to be religious or not, if you are described by the anomalous identity “free thinker” or identify with the religion of the atheist, you are beset by this inescapable anxiety in today’s world in which things have fallen apart and your “center”, be it your government, or the United Nations cannot hold. Chinua Achebe, “Things fall apart” 1958

Here is the “conclusion of the matter” as laid out by a Researcher recorded in the Book of Books. The Title of the Research document is Ecclesiastes. It is a book that sought to investigate a lifelong search for *meaning*.

This researcher sought to know what brings or makes **meaning** in the life of Man. He investigated all aspects of the human condition in order to find what can give meaning to the life and purpose of the human being and conceded as follows:

1. The human being cannot control life Eccl. 1:3-4
2. The human life is just a blink, verse 11.
3. Education syllabus tweeting will not do it because in chapter 12 verse 12 the Finding says: “of making many books, there is no end much study is weariness to the flesh.”

And as all you researchers know, when you have stated your Finding, you then make a Recommendation. Here is the Recommendation following the Finding of the Researcher:

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14:

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and obey His Commandments, for this is the whole duty of man”. I whole heartedly concur with and submit to this Finding and hereby humbly implore you to do so, that your life may have MEANING.

Respectfully Submitted.

Andrew Omotoso Friday November 17 2023

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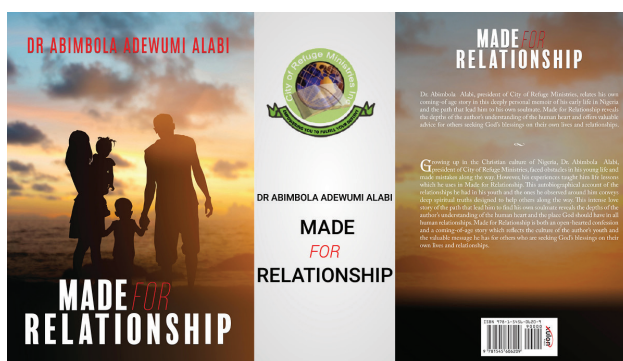
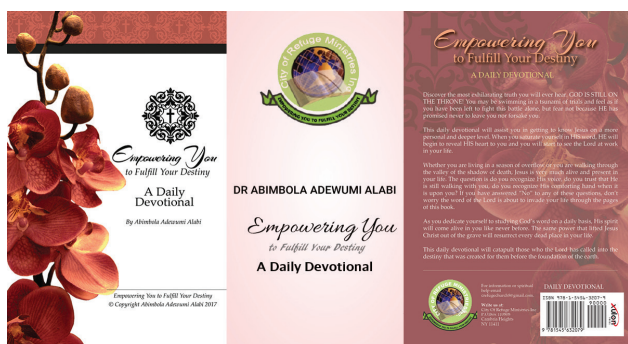
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Dr. Andrew Adebisi Omotoso is a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He holds a Doctoral degree from Columbia University New York and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Nyack College and Seminary.

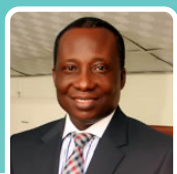
He has been involved in the field of Higher Education most of his professional life, serving at various times as Professor and Registrar in Universities in Nigeria and in the United States. He served as the Director and later the Minister of Christian Education in Bethel Gospel Assembly, Harlem, New York, until 2018. He is retired from Public service and resides with his wife, Boyinde Caroline, in Saugerties, New York. Rev. Dr. Omotoso is involved in Bethel Gospel Assembly’s mission work in South Africa, assisting in running Harmony Christian School in Rustenburg. At the same time, Dr. Boyinde Caroline Omotoso also served in South Africa as a missionary doctor for four years.



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... continued from the previous issue

STRESS MANAGEMENT



By Tony Akinyemi



PHYSICAL WARNING SIGNS OF STRESS (Short-term Symptoms):

The short-term warning signs of stress include **headaches; light-headedness; general aches and pains; upset stomach; loss of sexual desire; weight gain or weight loss; inability to concentrate; unusual restlessness; tiredness and exhaustion; cold and sweaty palms or inexplicable fatigue; increased heart rate or palpitations; trembling and shaking; insomnia or sleeplessness; muscle tension in neck, shoulders or face; loss of appetite or over-eating; indigestion; diarrhoea or even vomiting; grinding of teeth; clenched jaw; dizziness; tingling sensations at the extremities; numbness** (especially on one side of the body); etc.

LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCE OF UN-ADDRESSED STRESS

The long-term effects of stress on the body include **lowered immunity; asthma; cardiovascular disease (hypertension, heart attack, stroke, etc.); auto-immune diseases; depression; suicidal tendency; headaches; the common cold; Type II diabetes; premenstrual tension and menstrual irregularities; digestive diseases (e.g. gastric ulcers); sudden death;** etc.

HOW THE HUMAN BODY RESPONDS TO STRESS:

a. **Alarm Stage:** – rapid heartbeat, loss of appetite, etc. This is most noticeable in acute stress. The body quickly and rapidly returns to normal after a while.

b. **Resistance Stage:** If the stressful situation does not dissipate quickly, the body moves on to the second physiological stage, called the Resistance Stage. This stage may last for anywhere from a few days to even years. During this stage, the adrenal glands release a class of stress hormones known as **corticoids**, which include **glucocorticoids** and **mineralocorticoids**. **Cortisol** is an example of **glucocorticoids**, while **aldosterone** is an example of **mineralocorticoids**.

Glucocorticoids, especially **cortisol**, raise cholesterol levels, makes the blood to become thicker, and inhibit gastric secretions while facilitating colonic movement. In some cases, they also inhibit **insulin** production. We can now understand how stress can be a causative or aggravating factor in cardiovascular problems, GI problems, and adult-onset diabetes. **Cortisol** may also inhibit macrophages and natural killer cells, thus suppressing or compromising the immune system. This also explains why and how chronic or intermittent stress may make an individual vulnerable and susceptible to infections. **Mineralocorticoids**, on the other hand, may affect how the kidneys absorb and reabsorb sodium and water. This can also elevate a person's blood pressure. Stress may also increase the body's need for some minerals.

Adrenalin is another of the stress hormones released by the adrenal glands during a stressful situation. **Adrenalin** and **cortisol** prepare the body to respond to stress, making the heart to beat faster, raising blood pressure, and redirecting blood carrying oxygen and nutrients to organs that need more energy to function. Such organs include the brain and the muscles. Less blood goes to the stomach. This is why it is not advisable to eat a heavy meal when one is distressed or stressed. Less blood goes to the skin as well. This is to prepare the skin not to bleed profusely in case of an injury during this fight or flight situation. **Fibrin**, a substance that makes blood to clot more readily is released into the blood to slow or stop bleeding in the event of injury. **Glucose** and **fat** are also released into the blood to provide energy.

c. **Exhaustion Stage:** This is the third stage of stress. At this stage, the body doesn't know what to do again to address the stressful situation, so it gives up because it has exhausted all its resources and avenues for resolution. This stage is reached when the stress response mechanism has continued for too long. At this point, anything can happen. All the nerve energy of the body is virtually totally drained, the immune system dangerously compromised, and degenerative diseases can set in at this stage.

STRESS QUOTIENT

How stressful are you? This is called your stress quotient. **Thomas Whiteman, Ph.D.** and **Randy Petersen** offer a simple equation to calculate your stress quotient thus:

$$SQ = \frac{(SV + SN) \times A}{F}$$

SQ = Stress Quotient.
SV = Stress Events,
SN = Stress Environment,
A = Stress Aggravators,
F = Stress Fitness, and

As we can see, the addition of **stress events** and **stress environments**, multiplied by **stress aggravants** will increase a person's **stress quotient**. Meanwhile, the more stress fitness activities one indulges in, the less one's stress quotient. To burst your stress, you can either lessen three factors (stress events, stress environments, and stress aggravants) or increase one factor (stress fitness). To lessen stress factors while at the same time increasing stress fitness will even achieve better results.

HARMFUL METHODS OF COPING WITH STRESS

Stress can become even more harmful to us if we respond to it wrongly. Wrong ways of responding to stress include **blaming others, denying the reality of the problem, increased caffeine intake, smoking, using alcohol, chemical remedies (using drugs to try to relieve stress), over-eating or under-eating**, etc.

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GOD’S REMEDY FOR ELIJAH’S STRESS & BURNOUT (I Kings 19)

Elijah experienced burnout, but God came to the rescue. What God prescribed and administered to Elijah was simple but effective. No medications were involved. It involved only 5 simple remedies:

a. First Remedy: The Supernatural touch

- **First, Elijah was touched by an angel twice (I Kings 19:5,7).** God does send His angels from time to time to minister to and strengthen His people (Hebrews 1:8-9). Even Jesus enjoyed angelic ministration a number of times throughout His earthly ministry.
- **Second, Elijah encountered God Himself one-on-One (I Kings 19:13ff).** In His presence is fullness of joy, and at His right hand, pleasures forever more. *You show me the path of life. In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore (Psalm 16:11 NRSV).*

These two experiences that Elijah had with the supernatural actually set the tone for his **renewal**. If those who are experiencing stress could take time off to be in God’s presence, they would find out that God gives strength to the weary (Isaiah 26:3-4 and Isaiah 40:27-31).

b. Second Remedy: Nutritional Therapy

God sent His angel to bring **food** for Elijah to nourish his physical body (I Kings 19:5-8). Even though fasting is a must for any serious-minded Christian, yet fasting is not the most appropriate remedy for an already stressed-out body.

c. Third Remedy: Sleep Therapy

God made Elijah to sleep very well in order to be refreshed and rejuvenated (I Kings 19:5). Prayer vigils should be a necessary part of our Christian lives, but more vigils (sleepless nights) will further stress an already stressed individual.

d. Fourth Remedy: Word Therapy

God spoke to Elijah and God’s word brought Him relief (I Kings 19:9). There is a way that God’s Word brings restoration and renewal to us when we are stressed. *He spoke, and they were healed - snatched from the door of death Ps 107:20 (The Living Bible). I lie in the dust, completely discouraged; revive me by your word Ps 119:25 (New Living Translation). This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me Ps 119:50. You spoke to me, and I listened to every word. I belong to you, LORD God Almighty, and so your words filled my heart with joy and happiness Jer 15:16-17 (Today’s English Version).*

e. Fifth Remedy: Delegation

God taught Elijah the simple art of **delegation**. Some of his schedules were assigned to others to carry out (I Kings 19:15-16). This was the same remedy **Moses’ father-in-law** prescribed for him when he too was going through stress and burnout [Ex 18:13-26 (NIV); Num 11:4-50].

A POSITIVE APPROACH TO HANDLING STRESS (21 Tips):

- i. **Identify the stressors and minimize exposure to them where you can:** Change what you can change and receive grace to cope with what you can’t change. **Zig Ziglar** advised, *“Avoid spending too much time with people who brighten up a room by leaving it.”* There are definitely people to deliberately minimize contact with as part of your strategy to minimize your stress. Do your best to avoid stressors when possible. Hate no one. Just be wise. Period.
- ii. **Respond appropriately to the stressor(s):** Although the stressor may not be under your control, yet the ways you respond to it and its impact on your emotional, psychological, spiritual and

physical health are under your firm control. No amount of water can drown a boat until it gets into the boat. Once we don’t allow the water of events to enter into our lives, they would not devastate us. The way we look at or interpret events around our lives determines how they affect us (e.g. **Joseph** in **Genesis 45:4-8**). Joseph saw God’s hand in his brothers’ act of selling him as a slave to Egypt. He interpreted it as God sending him ahead to save lives. The way he interpreted his brothers’ action against him helped him to be able to easily forgive them. Ask God to help you see things in another light.

iii. **Get enough rest regularly:** God, in His wisdom, has ordained **daily** rest, **weekly** rest, and **annual** rest. We must sleep daily, take one day off to rest weekly, and go on annual vacations so that we don’t burn out. Six to eight hours of sleep daily helps to rejuvenate your body and mind. **Jesus** told the disciples in **Mark 6:31** to *‘come ye apart and rest for a while.’* Find time to rest. It is not wise to burn your candle at both ends. If you don’t create time to rest, men might soon lay you to rest. God forbid!

iv. **Nutritional Therapy:** Boosting your immune system helps with coping with stress. Eating **fruits** and **vegetables** every day is a good idea. The nutrients that really help us in times of stress include **Magnesium** and the **B vitamins (especially B₁₂, B₆, and B₅)**. So consume foods high in **Magnesium** (e.g. **spinach, beets, okro, bean sprouts, raw green leafy vegetables, etc**). **Vitamins C and E** and the mineral **Potassium** also help in fighting infection during stressful periods when our immunity is low. Good nutrition also helps to replace the nutrients zapped by stress as well as give you energy and mental clarity. A body under stress needs more **vitamins** and **minerals** than a body that is not under stress. Avoid bad foods by all means. According to **Dr. Don Colbert**, *“Sugar can be harmful to an already stressed out body.”*

v. **Physical exercise:** Exercising daily burns up stress hormones, leaving you feeling relaxed and refreshed.

vi. **Deep breathing:** Sighing is the body’s automatic deep breathing response to stress.

vii. **Alternate cold and warm shower:** This helps to stimulate blood circulation that can help relieve stress.

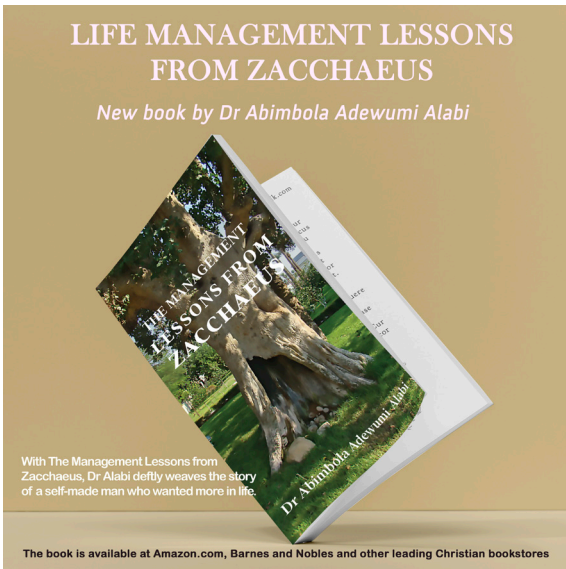
viii. **Soaking in warm water for 20 minutes** in your bathtub after exercise helps to relax your muscles. You may wish to add a little bath salt to the water before soaking in it.


ix. Appraise your daily activities and **slow down where necessary:** When you are young and full of energy, it is usually the police or traffic officer that warns you to slow down; but when you grow old, it is usually your doctor that warns you to slow down. Learn to slow down before a traffic warden or your doctor flags the warning sign.

x. **Laughter Therapy:** A good laugh can help to relieve stress and tension (**Proverbs 17:22**).

xi. **Deal with negative emotions: Anger, a hot temper, constant conflicts, bitterness, unforgiveness, resentment, hatred, fear,** all stress us. Unforgiveness doesn’t punish the person who has wronged you. It only destroys you. You are the one that won’t be able to sleep. The person who has wronged you may not even be aware that he has wronged you. Why not forgive, forget, and get well.

xiii. **Plan your life and plan each day of your life:** This helps to eliminate wastes and to achieve success, and consequently minimize stress.





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xiv. **Seek support:** You don't have to deal with your stress alone. That is why God has given you **family** and **friends**. Sometimes you may even need the services of **professionals** such as ministers of the gospel, Spirit-filled counsellors, psychologists, or psychiatrists.

xv. **Massage therapy:** A good body massage exerts beneficial effects in a number of conditions such as stress and anxiety, and in helping people to relax. Because of its ability to help stimulate circulation, it has also been shown to promote healing and relieve soreness and pain. Aromatherapy may also help.

xvi. **Word Therapy:** Meditation in the Word of God works more wonders than any medication. The Word is actually spiritual food and medicine for the spirit, soul, and body. Keep your mind on the Word, not on your challenges or problems. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. 4 Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength (Isaiah 26:3-4).*

xvii. **Cast your cares upon the Lord:** Never forget that God loves you. Your shoulders are not made to bear the burdens you are trying to bear. Jesus is your burden bearer. *Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7). Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30).* Let us all learn to put our trust and hope in the Lord. Without God, life is usually unbearable. Enter into a dynamic relationship with Jesus today and your life will definitely take a new turn for the better. You will begin to experience peace even in the midst of life's trials.

xviii. **Prayer** works too. When we pray, we are simply soliciting for divine participation in the affairs of our lives. We are more or less calling for help. *May God our Father give you grace and peace (Col. 1:2 Today's English Version).*

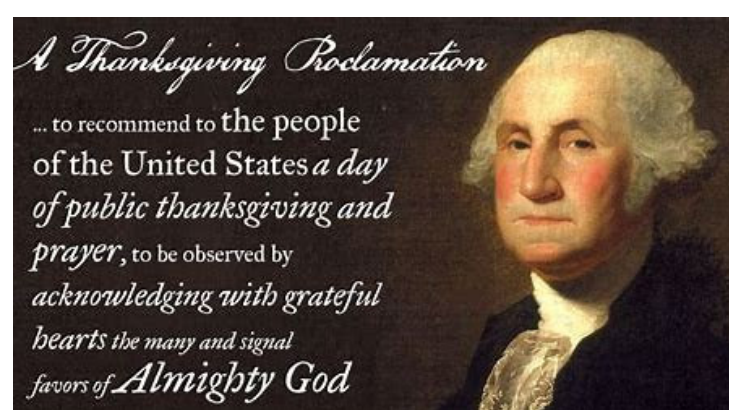
xix. **Relax,** God is in control. Maintain a positive attitude of faith even in your trials. *A relaxed attitude lengthens a man's life; jealousy rots it away (Proverbs 14:30 The Living Bible). A calm and undisturbed mind and heart are the life and health of the body, ... (Proverbs 14:30a Amplified Bible).* There are various relaxation techniques that are equally helpful.

xx. **Be careful with chemical remedy (medications):** Don Colbert, a medical doctor, counsels, *"I believe it is extremely important to go beyond simple chemical remedies such as Prozac that merely masks the symptoms."*

xxi. **Reconcile with God:** Get born-again if you are not, for there is no peace to the wicked (Isaiah 57:21; Psalm 11:6). It is given to the wicked to labour and struggle (Eccl. 2:26). Repent and be saved therefore.

xxi i. **Look to Jesus and live:** JESUS is our GREAT PHYSICIAN..

Shalom.



Thanksgiving

By Abimbola Alabi

God commanded us to "give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

After George Washington authorized the first Thanksgiving Day in 1789, 74 years passed without another such day of thanks. Then Abraham Lincoln established the holiday as an annual event in American life. His Thanksgiving Proclamation is worth reading again today:

"It is the duty of nations as well as of men to owe their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scripture and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord.

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November as a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens."

When did President Lincoln authorize our annual Thanksgiving Day? In 1863 - in the midst of the Civil War.

Hard places and hard times are the best times to be thankful. For then we open our lives to the God who alone can bless and prosper us. He cannot give us what we will not receive. An attitude of gratitude is essential to receiving the grace and favor of our heavenly Father. And it is appropriate in thanks for his every blessing, given now and in eternity.

And so, from my home and heart to yours, have a very blessed Thanksgiving Day!!!

EMPOWERING YOU TO FULFILL YOUR GOD GIVEN DESTINY



'How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.'

ACTS 10v 38

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