

THE multiwoman

FIRST ISSUE | APRIL 2026

MAGAZINE

Woman of the Year

Meet the Woman
Redefining Hospitality
in Nigeria

Life & Purpose

Purpose isn't Found.
It's Built.

Career & Leadership:

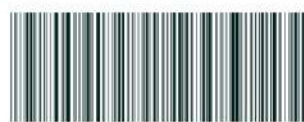
Building your Personal
Board of Directors

Love & Marriage:

Ambitious & In Love?
Yes, You Can Have Both

Rooted & Rising

*-The Women Who
Refused to Settle*



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FOUNDER'S LETTER

Rooted & Rising

Dear MultiWoman,

Eight years ago, in 2018, I did not launch an organisation. I simply created a room. I gathered women together because I had caught a passion; a deep, restless conviction that the women around me were capable of far more than they were living. Not because they lacked talent, intelligence, or drive. But because they lacked access: access to knowledge, to resources, to each other's stories.

I have never been able to make peace with mediocrity; not in myself, and not when I see untapped potential sitting quietly in someone who simply hasn't been shown what is possible. So I did what I could with what I had. I created a space. And then I invited women to fill it.

"I simply believe there is more. More for you. More for all of us."

That first conference in 2018 was the beginning of something I could feel but could not yet fully see. Since then, The MultiWoman Network has grown through eight years and five conference editions; not always in a straight line, not without seasons of pause and recalibration, but always moving forward. Always rooted in the same conviction that brought us together in the first place.



I have watched women walk into our gatherings carrying the quiet weight of deferred dreams, and walk out with their shoulders back and a decision made; Like Deborah, whom I met in Cyprus some years after that first conference. She told me that attending the very first TMW Conference had given her the courage to go back to school to study nursing; a course she truly loves. By the time we spoke, she was already a graduate. I could have wept.

And then there is Dasola, whose words I will never forget. She said: *"I saw the MultiWoman Conference flyer on Facebook and thought to myself – this programme will need a branded T-shirt. That was my first business pitch. I started a clothing factory in Yaba, and through it I have gotten a project worth millions. You gave me that strength. Sitting in that hall that day, listening to the guest speaker – a medical laboratory scientist and advocate for breastfeeding mothers – I caught a glimpse of what I intend to do with my own medical career."*

That day is always a reference point in my life."

That is the power I have always believed in. Not the power of one exceptional woman standing alone; but the transformative, irreversible power of women in community. One story sparks a decision. One decision starts a business. One business changes a family. And the ripple never stops.

And now, with this fifth edition, we are doing something new. You are holding in your hands the very first issue of the MultiWoman Magazine! A product of The MultiWoman Network, and a new way of extending our community beyond the walls of a conference hall. A magazine reaches you wherever you are. It sits with you in the quiet of your morning. It speaks to you when no one else is in the room. And it carries the stories, wisdom, and insights of women who are doing the work... building, healing, leading, and thriving; directly into your hands.

"We are not just rooted. We are rising – and we are taking you with us."

As we look ahead, my vision for The MultiWoman Network is clear: I want what we have built together to grow into a movement that is felt in boardrooms and living rooms, in startups and schools, across Nigeria and far beyond. I want more women making informed choices. I want more women owning their stories. I want more women knowing, deeply and without apology, that they were not made for the ordinary.

This magazine is a piece of that vision. Read it slowly. Share it generously. Let it find the woman in your life who needs it most. Because every story in these pages was written for a reason; and that reason might just be you.

Thank you for eight years of showing up. Thank you for believing, as I do, that there is always more.

There always is.

With love and bold intention,

Mary Ayuba

Founder, The MultiWoman Network · Mental Health Advocate · Accountability Coach



Woman of the Year

Woman of the Year

Tell us about your journey - where did you start and how did you get here?

My journey in business started at a production company, where I first served and gained hands-on experience. That foundation exposed me to the realities of building and sustaining value. From there, I equipped myself further by attending refresher courses in business and management before fully plunging into entrepreneurship alongside my husband, almost two decades ago.

Over the years, what began as a step of faith has grown into a journey marked by resilience, strategic growth, and continuous learning. Together, we have built and sustained multiple business arms under the Executive Group, navigating economic shifts, evolving markets, and the demands of expansion. Each phase has strengthened our capacity to lead, adapt, and innovate.

What was the defining moment that changed your trajectory?

The defining moment for us was our first auto show for Executive Motors Ltd, held at Golden Gate in the early 2000s. My husband and I single-handedly organised the entire event, inviting people to come and experience what we had built.





It was a bold move at the time, but it turned out to be a huge success. That moment gave us visibility and, more importantly, confidence. It showed us that we could achieve great things if we dared to step out against the odds. That single event launched our motor arm into the limelight and redefined the trajectory of our business journey.

Who or what inspired you to pursue this path?

In business, my inspiration has come from the stories of great entrepreneurs who defy limitations and create lasting impact. Seeing what is possible through vision, discipline, and persistence has continually fuelled my drive.

I am also deeply inspired by the process of building – turning ideas into structures that serve people and create opportunities. The support and partnership of my husband have also been a constant source of strength and motivation throughout this journey.

What was your biggest challenge, and how did you overcome it?

My biggest challenge has been the financial strain of keeping multiple companies afloat while navigating the realities of a constantly changing economy. Sustaining growth, maintaining profitability, and developing new strategies in response to shifting market forces require both foresight and resilience.

It has not been an easy journey, and in many ways, it is still ongoing. However, through wisdom, discipline, and the ability to adapt, we have continued to push forward, making strategic decisions that keep the businesses evolving and relevant.

Was there ever a moment you wanted to give up? What kept you going?

Yes, there have been moments when the pressure felt overwhelming. But what kept me going was the understanding that purpose is bigger than temporary challenges. The vision we carry, the lives connected to our work, and the conviction

that persistence eventually yields results have all been strong anchors that kept me moving forward.

What achievement are you most proud of?

I am most proud of creating one of the first ever non-alcoholic boutique hotels in Nigeria. It was a bold and unconventional vision at the time, but today it is growing in leaps and bounds and redefining hospitality standards in its own unique way.

I am also proud of creating the Symphony of Praise and Worship (SPAW) Talent Quest – a platform designed to groom and support upcoming Christian gospel music rising stars. Seeing lives transformed through this initiative brings deep fulfilment.

What's your personal definition of success?

Success, to me, is not merely the accumulation of achievements or milestones, but the alignment of one's life with purpose, impact, and stewardship. It is the ability to build something meaningful, sustain it with integrity, and use it as a channel to influence lives positively.

True success is measured by how well you maximise what has been entrusted to you; your vision, your opportunities, and your responsibilities; and how effectively you translate them into lasting value that outlives you.

How do you maintain balance in your life?

Maintaining balance means understanding seasons and prioritising what is most important at each point in time. It is not about doing everything at once, but about giving attention to what truly matters, when it matters most.

I have learned to stay structured, delegate effectively, and remain intentional about how I invest my time and energy.

What values guide your decisions?

Integrity, discipline, excellence, resilience, and purpose. These values guide my decisions and help me remain consistent, focused, and grounded regardless of external pressures.

How do you measure your impact?

I measure my impact by the structures I have helped build, the opportunities created for others, and the lives that are positively influenced through our work. Impact, for me, is about creating systems that empower people and leave lasting value beyond immediate results.

What change do you want to see in the world?

I want to see a world where people are driven by purpose, guided by integrity, and committed to building things that uplift others and create meaningful change.

What legacy do you want to leave?

A legacy of excellence, courage, and impact; building institutions that stand the test of time, creating opportunities for others to thrive, and demonstrating that with vision and determination, lasting value can be created against all odds.

What advice would you give your younger self?

"Stay focused, be resilient, and trust the process. The journey may be tough, but consistency and courage will always set you apart."

What do you wish someone had told you when you were starting out?

I wish someone had told me early on that the journey would require not just passion, but deep resilience, strategic



thinking, and the ability to withstand pressure. Preparation is key, and growth often comes disguised as challenges.

What's the one thing every woman should know?

Every woman should know that she carries immense capacity. With the right mindset, discipline, and clarity of purpose, she can build, lead, and sustain impactful structures while managing her responsibilities effectively.

What does a typical day look like for you?

My day starts with setting clear intentions for what needs to be achieved. I connect with my General Manager for updates on ongoing operations and align with key team members across different business arms. I oversee activities within the Executive Group, making strategic decisions and prioritising based on immediate and long-term needs. At the end of the day, I review progress and ensure alignment across all fronts.

How do you recharge/take care of yourself?

I recharge by taking time to rest mentally, enjoying quiet moments, and engaging in simple routines like having tea. I also expose myself to insightful and uplifting content that helps me reset and stay mentally prepared.

What's something people would be surprised to know about you?

Many people would be surprised to know that I am quite emotional and deeply value meaningful connections.

I also love to travel, especially with my husband, and I cherish quality time with family and close friends.

Final Words – Leave us with something we won't forget

Life will not always be easy, and the path may not always be clear – but vision backed by courage is powerful.

When you dare to take bold steps, even when the odds seem against you, you position yourself for uncommon outcomes. What may look like a risk today could become the very turning point that defines your future.

Stay consistent, stay resilient, and never underestimate what is possible when preparation meets opportunity.

Career & Leadership

Career & Leadership

Building Your Personal Board of Directors

A conversation with Chinenye Adeleye Founder, Volunteers Hub Africa | TEDx Speaker | Leadership Advocate

What is a "personal board of directors"?

Think about how companies have boards; groups of five, seven, or nine people, each with their own expertise in areas like finance, legal, operations, or strategy. The CEO asks the right person for the right advice. Now, imagine using that approach in your own life.

Your personal board of directors is a small group, usually three to five people, whom you choose to support your career and personal growth. Each person helps you see things you might miss. For example, I have someone who questions my leadership ideas, someone who knows the nonprofit world well, someone who gives honest feedback on my public speaking, and someone who is ten years ahead of me and helps me prepare for the future. This is a deliberate setup, not just luck.

Why does every woman need mentors?

Here's a key fact: A McKinsey study found that women with mentors are 56% more likely to get promoted than those without mentors. That's a big difference. Mentorship isn't just a nice-to-have; it

can change your career.

This is even more important for us. The World Economic Forum's 2024 Global Gender Gap Report says sub-Saharan Africa is at about 68% gender parity, so there's still a 32% gap to close. When I say every woman needs mentors, it's not just encouragement; it's a smart strategy.

Mentors do more than offer advice. They help you understand how things work and speak up for you in places you haven't been yet. When I started Volunteers Hub Africa in 2018, I was a young woman in Ibadan, creating something new. My mentors didn't just support me; they gave me tools, questioned my ideas, and introduced me to people and opportunities I couldn't have found on my own.

How many mentors should you have?

Aim for three to five mentors. Research from the Centre for Creative Leadership shows that people with several mentors experience higher career satisfaction, pay growth, and leadership skills than those with just one mentor. The key is to have active mentors; people who know what you're working on right now, not just names you mention.

I break it down into types. You need a technical mentor who knows your field well, a stretch mentor who is at the level you want to reach, a peer mentor who is working alongside you, and ideally a life mentor who understands you as a whole person. If you rely on one mentor for everything, it's too much for one person. If you have ten, you probably aren't building strong connections with any of them.

Where do you find mentors?

To be honest, my best mentoring relationships didn't begin with someone calling themselves a mentor. They started by working closely with others. I met mentors through volunteering, at conferences, in professional groups, and while working on projects together.

When I volunteered at TEDx events, I wasn't looking for mentors. I focused on doing my best and staying engaged. Over time, people noticed my commitment and chose to support me. A LinkedIn survey found that 61% of professionals say their best mentor relationships started informally. That matches my experience too.

My advice is to get involved where the work happens. Volunteer, join professional groups, and offer your help before asking for anything. When people see your dedication, the right mentors will notice and step up.

How do you approach someone to be your mentor?

Don't ask, "Will you be my mentor?" That question can feel like a big, unclear commitment for someone who doesn't know you well. Instead, start small. Ask a specific question or request fifteen minutes of their time to get their thoughts on a challenge you're facing.

After that, make sure to follow up. Let them know how you used their advice and what the results were. The best mentoring

relationships usually grow naturally over six to twelve months before anyone calls it mentoring.

My most valuable mentoring relationships were never officially defined. We never had a formal talk about it. The relationship developed because I kept showing up, used what I learned, and was open about my goals. Let the relationship grow naturally before giving it a label.

What makes a good mentor-mentee relationship?

Two things: honesty and reciprocity. If your mentor only tells you what you want to hear, that's friendship, not mentorship. And if you're hiding your real struggles because you want to look impressive, you're wasting both your time.

But here's what people miss: great mentoring is not one-directional. Your mentor brings wisdom and access. You bring fresh perspective, energy, and something that matters more than people realise: the satisfaction of impact.

I tell the young women I mentor to bring me their real problems, not just the polished version. Share the messy, uncomfortable, "I don't know what I'm doing" moments. That's where real growth happens.

What are common mentorship mistakes?

There are three main mistakes. First is being passive. If you wait for your mentor to lead, check in, or set the agenda, you're missing out. You should take the lead, come prepared, and bring questions, updates, and things you've tried since your last talk.

Second, only reach out when you need help. If your mentor only hears from you when you want something, it's not a real relationship. Share updates when things are going well, offer something useful to them, and celebrate their successes too.

Third, don't pick mentors just because of their status. The most impressive person you know might not be the right mentor for you right now. Choose someone whose experience matches your current goals.

Can you share a success story from your experience?

In 2015, I attended my first TEDx event as just an audience member. I had no platform, no organisation, and no experience in events. What I did have was a willingness to volunteer.

Over the next seven years, I kept volunteering, then started training volunteers, and later managed full volunteer teams through Volunteers Hub Africa, which I started in 2018. It grew to over 500 active members across four states and the FCT. I attended many TEDx events and was later invited to speak at TEDxLautech and then at TEDxTAU.

In February 2025, I joined an alumni panel at the Coca-Cola HBC #YouthEmpowered event with the CEO of Coca-Cola HBC and the President of Coca-Cola Africa. Every step of my journey was influenced by mentors I met along the way, not because I asked them to mentor me, but because I showed, through steady effort and results, that I was worth supporting.

That's the main idea: your personal board of directors comes together when you show real commitment. Focus on building that track record first, and the right people will appear.

Chinenye Adeleye is the Founder of Volunteers Hub Africa, a TEDx Speaker, and a passionate advocate for women's leadership and community development.

She has spent over a decade building networks, developing volunteers, and championing the power of mentorship as a tool for career advancement across Nigeria.



**Meet
Chinenye**



As an HR professional who has risen through the ranks, from HR Assistant to Director in just over a decade, I have had the privilege of not only navigating my own career journey but also shaping the trajectories of many professionals across different sectors.

Grace Oyeniyi
Global HR Consultant

Career advancement, especially for women, requires more than hard work and technical competence. It requires intentional positioning, clarity, and a deep understanding of how organizations truly operate.

1. Move Beyond Excellence to Strategic Visibility

Women must learn to communicate their impact clearly and confidently. This is not about self promotion in a superficial sense; it is about ensuring that your contributions are documented, understood, and aligned with organizational goals.

- Who knows the value I bring?
- Is my work tied to business outcomes or just task completion?

2. Understand the Business, Not Just Your Role

In my experience, the women who rise fastest are those who understand how their role contributes to revenue, growth, efficiency, or risk management. They don't just execute tasks; they solve business problems.

- How does my work impact the bottom line?
- What are the priorities of leadership this quarter?

When you speak the language of business, you position yourself for leadership.

3. Build Strategic Relationships, Not Just Networks

Networking is often misunderstood as collecting contacts. What truly advances careers is building meaningful, strategic relationships.

You need:

- Sponsors who advocate for you in rooms you are not in
- Mentors who guide your growth
- Peers who collaborate and amplify your work

Be intentional about who knows you, what they know you for, and how you are remembered when opportunities arise.

4. Position Yourself Before You Are Ready

Many women wait until they feel 100% ready before stepping forward. In contrast, I have seen less-qualified individuals take on opportunities simply because they were willing.

Growth often requires stepping into spaces that stretch you. Do not wait for perfection – Prepare, position, and proceed.

Raise your hand for:

- Leadership roles on projects
- High-visibility assignments
- Opportunities that align

with your long-term goals

Confidence is built in motion, not in waiting!

5. Master the Art of Professional Assertiveness

There is a fine balance between being collaborative and being overlooked.

Women must learn to:

- Speak up in meetings
- Share ideas without hesitation
- Set boundaries respectfully

Assertiveness is not aggression; it is clarity about your value and your expectations.

Over time, how you communicate shapes how you are perceived.

6. Invest in Continuous Growth and Relevance

The workplace is evolving rapidly, and staying relevant is non-negotiable.

This means:

- Acquiring new skills
- Staying informed about industry trends
- Pursuing certifications or executive education where necessary

But beyond formal learning, it also involves self-awareness, understanding your strengths, gaps, and growth trajectory.

Your career is your responsibility!

7. Align Your Career With Your Life, Not Against It

For many women, career advancement is closely tied to personal responsibilities and life transitions.

The goal is not to “have it all” at once, but to make intentional choices that align with your current season.

At different points, you may prioritize growth, stability, flexibility, or impact and that is valid.

What matters is that your career decisions are proactive, not reactive.

Final Thoughts

Career advancement is not just about climbing the ladder; it is about building a structure that can sustain your growth, influence, and impact over time.

As women, we must move from simply participating in the workforce to shaping it.

This requires courage, clarity, and strategy.

And most importantly, it requires that we stop waiting to be chosen and start positioning ourselves to lead.



Trailblazer

*F*ifty years is not just time; it is fire, It is pressure, pruning, perseverance, and becoming. It is the quiet deaths no one saw and the bold resurrections everyone benefits from. If there is one thing I know now, it is this: trailblazers are not born; they are forged.

These are not just lessons but truths I bled for, grew through, and now offer as a torch to every woman ready to rise.

1. You owe yourself honesty before you owe the world performance.
2. Healing is not optional if you intend to lead.
3. Your voice is not too much; you were just taught to whisper.
4. Growth will offend the version of you that chose comfort.
5. You cannot walk in purpose while negotiating your worth.
6. Silence can be wisdom, but it must never become fear.
7. The cost of pretending is always higher than the cost of truth.
8. You will outgrow people, and that is not betrayal.
9. Boundaries are not rejection; they are self-respect in action.
10. Stop asking permission for what God has already

placed within you.

11. Pain is a teacher, not a life sentence.
12. You are allowed to evolve without explaining yourself to everyone.
13. Consistency will take you where motivation cannot.
14. Comparison is the thief of calling, not just joy.
15. Fear is loud, but it is rarely truthful.
16. Discipline is the bridge between intention and impact.
17. Not everyone clapping for you is for you.
18. Obedience will often look like a risk to others.
19. Rest is not weakness; it is part of strategy.
20. You cannot pour from a soul that is constantly ignored.
21. Forgiveness frees you; it does not excuse them.
22. Your environment will either stretch you or shrink you. Choose wisely.
23. Wisdom often whispers; slow down enough to hear it.
24. You are allowed to start again, without apology.
25. Clarity comes from movement, not overthinking.
26. What you tolerate teaches people how to treat you.
27. Confidence is built in private before it is displayed in public.
28. You are not behind; you are being prepared.
29. Purpose will demand more from you than comfort ever will.
30. You cannot heal

***50 Lessons I have
Learned in my
50 years of Life***

in the same space that broke you.

31. Your story is not shameful; it is a strategy for someone else's survival.

32. Courage is not the absence of fear; it is moving with it.

33. You will have to fight for the woman you are becoming.

34. You cannot break ceilings you are afraid to touch.

35. Not every closed door is rejection; some are protection.

36. Speak life over yourself, even when your voice shakes.

37. Excellence is not perfection; it is intentionality.

38. Your calling will stretch your capacity; let it.

39. You cannot dim your light and expect to lead others out of darkness.

40. Faith is not passive; it is active, bold, and sometimes uncomfortable.

41. The strongest relationship you will ever have is with yourself. Invest in it.

42. You are not too late. You are right on time for your assignment.

43. Stop shrinking to fit places you have already outgrown.

44. The world does not need another copy; it needs your authenticity.

45. You are allowed to take up space; fully and unapologetically.

46. Legacy is not built in crowds; it is built in consistency.

47. You cannot lead others where you refuse to go within yourself.

48. Your scars are not signs of weakness; they are proof you overcame.

49. Your assignment is not a competition.

50. Not everyone assigned to your life is meant to stay.

Being a trailblazer is not about being seen first, it is about going first. It is choosing courage when fear feels safer. It is walking paths no one around you understands, while carrying a vision that has not yet been validated. It is standing tall when it would be easier to shrink. It is rising again, and again, until rising becomes your nature.

To every woman reading this:

You are not here by accident. You are not too broken, too late, too quiet, or too much. You are necessary. There is a path with your name on it that no one else can walk. There is a voice within you that the world is waiting to hear. There is a fire in you that was never meant to be contained.

So, rise, not when it is easy, but because it's necessary.

Rise, not when you feel ready, but because you are called.

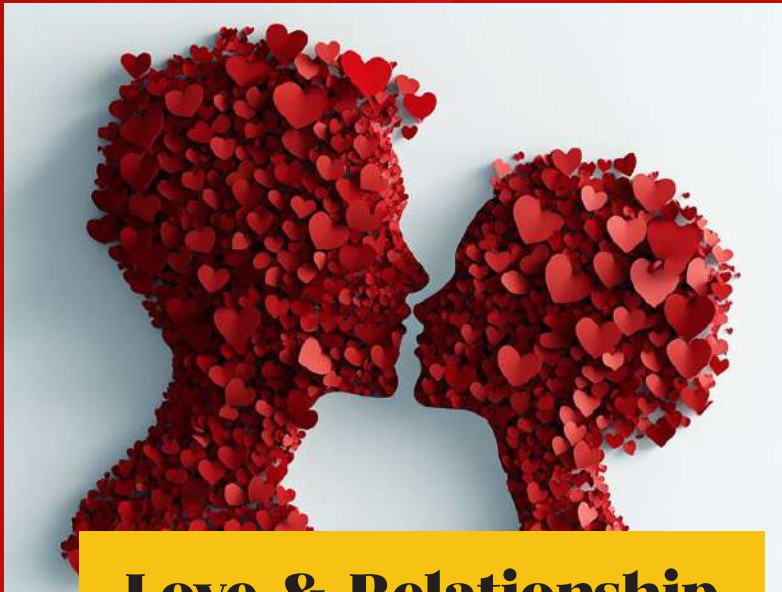
Rise, not just for yourself, but for every woman who will find her courage because you found yours.

Trailblazers don't wait for permission; They become the permission. And now it's your turn.



**Coach
Diane
Mwale**

Diane Mwale, affectionately known as Lady Dee, is a John Maxwell Certified Coach, a compassionate Pastor, and a published Author. She is also the visionary behind Transcend Life Coaching & Leadership Development.



Love & Relationship

Thriving in Marriage/ Relationship while Building Your Career

An interview with Mr. & Mrs. Sunday and Timmie Anani

What are the biggest challenges career-driven women face in marriage?

Timmie: There are many challenges a career-driven woman might face in marriage, but the most difficult one is having an unsupportive husband. The pressures of work, business, and the home front are real; but when you have a spouse who is genuinely supportive, the other challenges become far more manageable. It does not mean those challenges are minor or inconsequential, but everything is a lot easier when you have a supportive, engaged husband by your side. Conversely, it is significantly harder to be a career-driven woman when you are married to someone who does not support your ambitions.

Sunday: One major challenge career-driven wives face is a husband who feels threatened or inferior, particularly if she is high-flying. That insecurity can pose a serious obstacle to a woman's drive to reach the peak of her career. Beyond that, career-driven women often face the challenge of managing multiple roles; as a wife, a mother, a senior executive, or a business owner. Thankfully, this is increasingly mitigated by the growing availability of domestic and professional support structures.

How do you communicate your ambitions to your partner?

Timmie: Communicating my ambitions to my husband is something that comes naturally and easily. I do not have to agonise over it, because I know he genuinely wants the best for me. His openness and receptiveness make it easy for me

to share freely.

Sunday: As my wife said, communication between us is straightforward. It really comes down to having an open, honest channel between spouses; sitting down together, asking each other where we are headed, what our vision is, and what we want our lives to look like. Ambition surfaces naturally in that kind of conversation. It is simply a matter of face-to-face dialogue, shared vision, and mutual interest in each other's direction. It is not complicated at all.

What does "partnership" really look like in modern marriage?

Timmie: Partnership in a modern marriage means choosing "us" over "me." It means asking yourself, "What impact will this decision have on my marriage?" It is not about rigidly maintaining roles but about being flexible as the marriage evolves through

different seasons. Partnership means understanding that we are different people with different opinions, yet choosing to align and present a unified front on the things we agree on. It is about individual and collective growth; without control or force.

Sunday: Whether in a modern marriage or in times past, partnership is a fundamental ingredient for growth and sustainability. It is what causes two people to stand together, support each other, and drive each other toward the destination they have individually and collectively agreed to pursue. Partnership touches everything – domestic support, finances, shared goals, defence of one's spouse in the face of external opposition, and providing the emotional shoulder your partner needs to know they are not doing life alone.

As a counsellor, I can honestly say I would not have reached the heights I have without my wife's partnership. Much of what the world sees on the surface is driven by a very strong support system at home. As the scripture says, one shall chase a thousand and two shall put ten thousand to flight. Partnership is a powerful multiplier in marriage; it cannot be taken lightly.

your career demands more time?

Timmie: The best approach is to communicate proactively; before your spouse even has to ask. As soon as I know I am going to be busier than usual, I communicate it so we can manage expectations together.

Sunday: When your career demands more time, the first and most important thing to do is communicate it clearly to your spouse. A common mistake busy spouses make is assuming their partner should simply understand that things have changed. I learned this personally; when I was in a particularly demanding season at work, my wife began to feel the absence of time I used to give her. It was a sign that I had not communicated the shift clearly enough.

Once you communicate, the second step is to strike a balance intentionally. Understand that work belongs in work hours as much as possible. And where work inevitably bleeds into home life, carve out deliberate time for your family; time to be present, to laugh, to simply be together. Your spouse and family need you as a partner and parent, not just as a provider. Be intentional about creating those windows, and they will know that you are not just working for the money; you are still fully invested in them.

for a healthy marriage?

Timmie: Non-negotiables will vary from home to home. For a Christian home like ours, God is the ultimate non-negotiable – the foundation of the marriage itself. Beyond that, I would name a teachable spirit, mutual understanding, trust, respect, love, and emotional intimacy.

Sunday: The list of non-negotiables is long, but let me name three that I consider most critical. First, communication! It is the bedrock of connection. Couples who do not communicate cannot connect, and couples who do not connect cannot grow together. They may share a roof, but they will drift apart. Second, sound financial management. It is often said that where there is no finance, there is no romance, and there is truth in that. Money must be earned, managed wisely, multiplied, and handled transparently. Where this breaks down, it can become a serious source of conflict. Third, intentional intimacy; and I mean far more than physical romance. True intimacy is about being in each other's world, knowing what your spouse is going through, growing together rather than silently apart. **T h e s e t h r e e** – communication, financial management, and intentional intimacy; are the pillars of a healthy marriage.

How do you handle when

What are non-negotiables

How do you maintain intimacy when you're busy/tired?

Timmie: As someone who places a high value on emotional intimacy, I

initially, but I must say he has grown beautifully in this area. The hearts staying connected, even while being away from each other or being engrossed in work is a yummy kind of intimacy.

when you are stretched thin. So before the busy season hits, be the kind of partner who has already laid that foundation.

You see, if you intentionally

Oluwatimiléhin Anani is a trauma-informed marriage and relationship coach and a practicing Christian sex therapist. She is a trained Cloud Security Engineer as well as a Procurement and Supply Chain personnel. Oluwatimilehin enjoys playing Scrabble in her leisure time. She is married to Sunday and is a privileged mother of 2 amazing children.

Sunday Anani is a distinguished marriage counselor, author, and relationship coach. He is also the author of 10 impactful books on relationships and marriage. He provides a comprehensive and highly impactful Pre-Marriage training program that equips singles with the tools they need to build successful and fulfilling marriages. (He reaches people online via Facebook, Instagram, and other social media platforms @sunday Anani). Sunday is also a Chartered Accountant and is happily married to Oluwatimilehin, who is also a certified marriage counselor. They are blessed with two amazing children.



be
lieve connection
does not have to pause just
because life gets busy. We
don't have to wait till a
genital meet and greet
happens before we stay
intimate; it can happen
anywhere. Thoughtful
m e s s a g e s , s m a l l
unexpected gifts, and kind
gestures all sustain
emotional connection even
in the middle of a
demanding season. My
husband struggled with this

Sunday: The key is
intentionality. In the spaces
between your busyness, if
you truly want to stay
connected to your spouse,
you will find small windows to
do so. Intimacy is far broader
than the bedroom. It shows
up in the little things – a
thoughtful message, a
moment of undivided
attention, a gesture that
says, "I see you." When you
consistently sow seeds of
intimacy, your spouse will
carry that security with them
even through the seasons

c
reate time for
your spouse within your
busy schedule, they will
appreciate it more because
they know that it comes
with a lot of sacrifice for it to
be able to achieve. It would
be very wrong to always
give excuses that you are
not able to do this because
you are busy, because the
truth is that those who are
busy end up making babies.

They know where to touch when they are horny. So, intimacy is beyond just physical sex. It should be through deliberate acts, intentional acts of connection, through our days, and even before you think of bedtime.

What's your advice for women whose partners don't support their ambitions?

Timmie: Finding yourself in that position must be incredibly difficult. My first advice would be to seek to understand why. Is your partner uninformed about your ambitions? Are they afraid? Do they feel threatened by what your success might mean for the relationship? Understanding the root of their resistance is the first step. From there, communicate clearly and honestly. And if needed, seek wise counsel on how to move forward based on what you discover.

Sunday: My advice is simple – do not stop. You still have a life to live, with or without your spouse's support. Continue to engage them, continue to help them see why your ambitions matter and how their support would make a difference. But do not pack up your vision simply because someone is not cheering you on.

This is, ideally, a conversation that should happen before marriage; knowing where your partner stands on your goals and dreams before you commit. But we know that life is not always that tidy. If you find yourself in this situation, keep going. Keep pushing your vision forward, provided it does not prevent your spouse from pursuing their own. Living with a non-supportive partner is genuinely hard, but you must not allow that to become the reason you abandon what you are called to do.

Final words...

Sunday & Timmie: Marriage requires many strategies, far more than any single interview can capture. But if we were to summarise: make God the foundation, prioritise each other above all else, and choose to be selfless daily. Selfishness is one of the greatest threats to a thriving marriage.

Most of what makes a marriage work is not secret knowledge; it is things we already know. The question is whether we are actually doing them. So our challenge to every reader is this: what good thing do you already know that you have not yet put into practice? Start there. The principles you apply consistently are the ones that will produce results. Do not wait for a supernatural breakthrough – start doing what you know, and watch your marriage transform.

The Power of Female Friendships

By Dr. Oluwatoni Abraham

Friendship, to me, is not optional, it is essential. We are hardwired for connection. From the very beginning of our lives, we reach outward, looking for people to experience the world with. For many, our first friendships are with siblings, but as we grow, that circle expands. There is something deeply human about the desire to know and to be known. Friendship, like breathing, becomes something we instinctively reach for, even as its expression changes over time.

And it does change.

As we get older, everything changes, not just friendship. Life evolves, and with it, so do we. Our priorities shift, our responsibilities multiply, our bodies change, and the weight of life becomes more apparent. The older you get, the more you realize that change is the only constant. Friendship is not exempt from this; it simply transforms alongside us.

One of the biggest shifts is in what we value. When we're younger, friendships are often built on proximity and shared experiences – same

school, same class, same church. It's about fun, familiarity, and convenience. But as life gets heavier, those foundations begin to feel insufficient. You start to crave something deeper: people who can carry weight with you. Shared values begin to matter more than shared environments. You want friends who can hold space for your struggles as well as share in your laughter.

Life dynamics also play a role. At 20, your world might revolve around school. At 35, you're juggling work, relationships, family, and naturally, friendship has to adjust to fit into that reality.

This is part of why female friendships, in particular, can be so powerful. There is a kind of understanding that comes from shared lived experience. There are parts of womanhood that can only be fully understood by other women, nuances that don't need to be over-explained. There is comfort in being known in that way, in being seen without translation. Friendship with people like you, your kin, *b e c o m e s d e e p l y* grounding. It is to be fully known and to be deeply chosen.

At its core, a healthy friendship is built on mutual choosing. It's not one-sided. You choose them, and they choose you consistently. There is love,

kindness, and acceptance, there is openness, or at the very least, a willingness to be truthful. In many ways, the ingredients of a healthy friendship are the same as any meaningful relationship: commitment, compassion, and the decision to stay kind through the process of knowing each other.

But maintaining friendships as adults requires intention. We often assume that distance in friendships is just about time, but it's also about emotional energy. People are tired, not just physically, but emotionally. Between work, family, and the general demands of life, many people are running on empty. So the solution isn't always "make more time," sometimes it's "make connection easier." That might look like small, consistent touchpoints like sending a message just to say "I'm thinking of you," sharing a reel, dropping a voice note. These little gestures matter. They keep the thread of connection alive without demanding too much. At the same time, friendships need depth, not just maintenance and that's where intentional time comes in. Scheduling a monthly call, planning visits, or carving out moments to truly catch up becomes necessary. It may not be as frequent as it once was, but it can still be meaningful.

Another shift is that as we grow older, friendship becomes less about shared presence and more about shared storytelling. When you lived in the same space like in university, you experienced life together in real time. You saw each other's highs and lows without needing explanation. But now, you have to invite your friends into your life. You have to tell them about your day, your work, your family. You have to share pictures, random thoughts, small moments. You have to let them in deliberately. Because strong friendships are built on two things: sharing the mundane and experiencing life together. And sometimes, you have to be creative about how you recreate that. It could look like working in the same space without necessarily talking much, just being present in each other's lives in quiet ways.

Although not all friendships are meant to last forever, every healthy relationship goes through challenging seasons and it is important to know that a difficult friendship is not the same as a toxic one. However, toxic friendships exist and we need to be able to recognize them. A toxic friendship is one that consistently diminishes you, it chips away at your sense of self through constant criticism, lack of support, or an

inability to celebrate you. It is a space where you feel like you have to perform, where you cannot fully be yourself. Toxicity can also show up as cruelty through words or actions or as concealment, when someone is unwilling to acknowledge or celebrate you openly. When love, kindness, and acceptance are absent, the foundation of friendship is gone.

The hard part is that you can still feel affection for someone who is not good for you and holding those two truths of "I like this person" and "this person is not good for me" is difficult, but it is necessary. Sometimes, the healthiest thing you can do is to let go, even when it doesn't feel easy.

On the other end of the spectrum is building new friendships as adults and I think it starts simply: talk to people. Be open. Say hello. You must know that friendship is a journey that starts by talking to people and sometimes, the journey does not end in friendship but it is impossible to end in friendship without talking to people. Not every connection will become a friendship and that's okay. You can have meaningful conversations with people, enjoy their company occasionally, and still not be friends.

This is one of the hardest lessons I've had to learn

about friendship, that openness is not the same thing as friendship. Just because you've had a vulnerable conversation with someone, shared parts of your life, or exist within the same community does not mean you have arrived at friendship. At best, what exists in those early stages is friendliness, sometimes, just niceness. **And niceness is not the same thing as being known, carried, or deeply considered.**

I've had to confront this personally. For a long time, I believed that opening myself up to people automatically made me their friend. My thinking was: "If I've shared this much with you, then you must know that I want you to see me deeply and I must mean something to you." But I've come to realize that it doesn't work that way. **Friendship is not built on a single act of vulnerability. It is built on mutual, consistent choosing over time.**

So I'm learning to stay within the reality of relationships. To ask myself, honestly: in the landscape of this person's life, where do I truly stand? Not based on what I feel, but on what has actually been built. Because the truth is, it takes intention to take up space in someone's heart. It is not accidental. It is not assumed. It is a decision, one that has to be made on both sides and until that decision is clear, it's okay to let things be what they are, without placing the weight of

friendship on them too soon.

As adults, we also need to embrace the idea that friendships exist in layers. Not everyone will be your "everything" friend. Some people will share your professional interests, others your personal struggles, others your spiritual life. Different friendships serve different purposes, and that diversity is not a failure, it's a reflection of the complexity of our lives.

At the heart of it all, I believe very deeply that some of the greatest loves of your life will be your friendships. Not in competition with romantic relationships, but alongside them. In fact, the strongest romantic relationships are built on friendship.

Your friendships will hold you, shape you, and in many ways, save you. So choose them well. Nurture them intentionally. And when necessary, have the courage to release them. **Because to be known, and to be loved in that knowing is one of the most profound experiences we get to have as human beings.**



Women's Health Essentials

An interview with Dr. Oyindamola Alabi Public Health Resident Doctor | Sexual & Reproductive Health Specialist | Founder, AtoZwithDrO (a platform where she shares practical and valuable insights regarding women's health).

Q- What health screenings should every woman prioritize by age?

Screening is the search for unrecognised disease in apparently healthy people through tests or examinations, with the goal of detecting health issues early, improving outcomes, and reducing disease burden. It is not a luxury; it is a necessity.

Screening recommendations can vary based on age, family history, and personal health history, but by undergoing these screenings regularly, women can take proactive steps toward preserving their health and well-being.

General screenings recommended for all women, regardless of age, include:

Blood pressure screening. Hypertension is one of the most prevalent health conditions in Nigeria and globally, and it is often asymptomatic; earning it the nickname "the silent killer." If you do not check, you may never know your

numbers are high. An estimated 1.4 billion people aged 30 to 79 live with hypertension worldwide, and statistics show that one in three Nigerians is living with high blood pressure. Blood pressure should be checked at least every two years if readings are under 120/80 mmHg.

Body Mass Index (BMI). BMI is used to estimate body fat and assess the risk of obesity, which is a major risk factor for Type 2 Diabetes, heart disease, and several cancers. It is calculated by dividing your weight in kilograms by your height in metres squared, with normal values ranging from 18.5 to 24.9 kg/m².

Blood sugar screening. For adults with a BMI of 25 or above, alongside additional risk factors, screening for Type 2 Diabetes is recommended. This is done through a blood test that measures fasting blood sugar levels.

Cholesterol screening. Blood tests that measure cholesterol and triglyceride levels help assess heart

disease risk. These are recommended every four to six years, and more frequently if risk factors are present.

Mental health screening. Mental health is a crucial component of overall well-being, yet its challenges are often invisible. Regular screening for conditions such as depression is especially important during significant life changes or periods of vulnerability; including pregnancy and the postpartum period.

Vision and hearing checks. Regular assessments are essential, particularly if any symptoms arise.

Age-specific screenings for women include:

From **age 21**, a Pap smear – also known as cervical cancer screening – should be done every three years until age 65. A sample is collected from the cervix during a pelvic examination to test for cervical cancer and precancerous conditions. It is worth noting that HPV vaccines are available and free for girl

children in Nigeria between the ages of 9 and 14 to help prevent cervical cancer.

From **age 30**, HPV testing combined with a Pap smear is recommended every five years until age 65. Breast cancer screening and clinical or self-examination are also recommended from age 30. Women under 35 should have a breast scan annually; women above 35 should have a mammogram annually. Remember; prevention is better than cure.

Sexually active women of any age, particularly those with new or multiple partners, should screen regularly for sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Women aged **45 to 75** are recommended to screen for colorectal cancer using faecal occult blood testing or colonoscopy.

Women aged **65 and older**; or younger women with risk factors; should undergo bone density screening, which uses a type of X-ray to measure bone mineral density and assess the risk of osteoporosis.

Additional important screenings include HIV, Hepatitis B and C, anaemia (especially for pregnant women and those with nutritional deficiencies), thyroid function (recommended for women with a family history of thyroid disease), and

genetic counselling for those with a family history of breast, ovarian, or uterine cancers.

This list may seem extensive, but it is based on universal best practices and can always be tailored to each woman's individual health needs.

What are common women's health issues that often get ignored?

Mental health conditions are among the most commonly ignored, largely due to the stigma attached to them. Unfortunately, mental health remains one of the least discussed topics; particularly in Black communities.

It is estimated that one in ten people is dealing with some form of mental illness, ranging from schizophrenia and major depressive disorder to bipolar disorder, anxiety, and substance use disorder. Red flags to watch for include persistent sadness, withdrawal from family and friends, changes in sleep or appetite, and suicidal thoughts. Please speak up before it gets too late. Do not allow shame or stigma to prevent you from getting the care you deserve.

Menstrual irregularities and hormonal imbalances are also prevalent and frequently overlooked. Many women either dismiss their symptoms or turn to herbal remedies that may actually worsen their condition.

Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) and endometriosis are common conditions affecting women of reproductive age.. between 15 and 49; and both can be effectively managed when detected early.

My appeal to every woman is this: understand your body, know your menstrual cycle, and consult a doctor if anything feels unusual. Ignorance is not bliss.

How do you advocate for yourself in healthcare settings?

Advocacy begins with being informed and intentional about your health and your family history. One of the first questions asked in a consultation room is, "What is your last menstrual period?"; and yet many women are still caught off guard by this. Knowing your own body is the starting point.

Women should learn to ask questions of trained and licensed healthcare professionals. A great deal of misinformation is circulating, and it has led to serious complications and, in some cases, loss of life. Ask questions. Clarify any concerns. Bring a trusted support person to your appointments if it helps you feel more at ease.

And please know - there is absolutely nothing wrong

with seeking a second or even a third opinion if you are uncertain about a diagnosis or treatment plan. Your voice matters. Speak up.

What should women know about reproductive health?

Reproductive health encompasses the health and well-being of individuals across their entire lifespan. It includes family planning, prevention and management of reproductive tract infections, maternal and child health, management of infertility and sexual dysfunction, and the prevention and treatment of cancers of the reproductive system.

These services are available and accessible to women of all ages. Nigeria continues to have one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world, and teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections are on the rise. These are serious public health concerns that can be addressed through continuous sensitisation, comprehensive sexuality education, and timely presentation to healthcare facilities for expert care.

When should you see a doctor, and when can you wait?

Although women generally have better health-seeking behaviour than men, some women still delay seeking help until symptoms worsen; often due to cultural, religious, or financial barriers.

Symptoms that require prompt medical attention include severe chest pain or difficulty breathing, persistent fever, severe headaches, sudden numbness or weakness, changes in bowel or bladder habits, unexplained weight loss or gain, and unusual vaginal bleeding or discharge.

Understand your body. Know what is normal for you. And when something feels off, seek help promptly.

What warning signs should women never ignore?

Women experience many changes in their bodies; from mild pelvic discomfort to headaches and back pain. But there are certain signs that should never be dismissed:

- Any changes in the breast or nipple; including rashes, redness, lumps, or nipple discharge
- Irregular vaginal bleeding or spotting
- Sudden or unexplained weight gain or loss
- Severe chest pain during activity or at rest
- Sudden blurry vision, sudden loss of vision in one eye, or severe headaches

- Changes in bowel habits

If you notice any of these symptoms, seek immediate professional medical care.

How does stress affect women's health specifically?

Stress is far more than a mindset problem. Chronic stress is a physiological state; it alters hormones, immune function, and metabolism.

When a woman experiences chronic stress, her body shifts into survival mode, producing elevated levels of cortisol; the stress hormone. High cortisol increases inflammation, which raises the risk of heart disease, stroke, and obesity. It also promotes fat storage around the abdomen and intensifies cravings for sugary and fatty foods.

Other effects of chronic stress include disrupted sleep, slowed metabolism, menstrual irregularities, and reduced motivation to exercise.

Women can effectively manage stress through deep breathing exercises, regular walks, healthy eating, adequate sleep, and meaningful social connection.

What preventive measures can we take right now?

Our lifestyle and diet play a major role in our long-term

health, and we must be intentional about both. Reduce the consumption of processed foods, eat balanced meals, and exercise regularly.

Exercise is defined as planned, structured, and repetitive physical activity aimed at improving or maintaining physical fitness and well-being. Regular exercise helps prevent chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and obesity, and it also supports mental health and cognitive function. The recommended target is 150 to 300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week, or 75 to 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity, alongside muscle-strengthening exercises such as squats or push-ups; at least twice a week.

Let us commit to our health by eating right, exercising consistently, and keeping up with our vaccinations.

Final Words:

To every woman reading this – prioritise your health. Understand your body and your menstrual cycle. Regular check-ups and screenings are a necessity, not a luxury. Eat well, stay hydrated, and aim for seven to eight hours of quality sleep every night.

Be intentional. If something feels wrong, seek medical attention promptly and advocate for yourself; and for the women around you. You deserve the very best care.

The Skin You Live In: Why Every Woman Must Own Her Skin Health

In many conversations about women's health, the focus tends to lean toward reproductive health, nutrition, emotional well-being, and leadership. Yet one of the most essential and visible organs of the human body – the skin – is frequently reduced to cosmetic conversations and beauty expectations.

For women who are becoming bolder, more whole, and more influential, understanding skin health goes far beyond appearance. It is about health awareness, self-respect, and the intentional care of the body we live in every single day.

The skin is not merely what the world sees. It is the largest organ of the human body, performing complex and vital functions that protect, regulate, and connect us to our environment. When we truly understand its significance, we begin to treat it with the care and respect it deserves.

The Skin: Beyond Beauty

The skin serves as the body's first line of defence against infections, environmental pollutants, harmful microorganisms, and ultraviolet radiation. It regulates body temperature, supports immune function, and enables our sense of touch.

Despite its importance, skin health remains one of the most overlooked aspects of public health – particularly in developing communities.

Many women grow up without access to accurate information about proper skin care. Instead, they are exposed to myths, societal pressures, and unregulated products that promise quick results but often cause long-term damage. This knowledge gap contributes to preventable conditions such as acne, fungal infections, eczema, contact dermatitis, and skin irritation caused by unsafe cosmetic practices.

Skin health education should not be confined to dermatology clinics. It must become a fundamental part of everyday health knowledge for women and families alike.

The Hidden Burden of Skin Conditions

Skin conditions are among the most common health challenges globally, affecting millions across all age groups. Yet because many are not immediately life-threatening, they are often neglected or poorly managed.

Women, however, face unique pressures. Cultural expectations, media portrayals, and societal beauty

standards frequently push women toward practices that compromise their skin integrity.

The misuse of skin-lightening products and steroid-based creams remains a significant concern. While marketed as quick solutions, many of these

products weaken the skin, cause thinning, increase vulnerability to infections, and lead to long-term dermatological complications. Healthy skin should never be sacrificed in pursuit of unrealistic beauty ideals.

Caring for your skin is not vanity. It is a powerful expression of self-care and self-leadership.

Women who understand their bodies are better positioned to make informed health

decisions, positively influence their families, and contribute meaningfully to healthier communities.

Maintaining healthy skin does not require complicated routines or expensive products. Often, the most effective practices are simple and consistent:

• Maintaining proper hygiene

- and regular cleansing
- Staying hydrated and nourishing the body with balanced nutrition
- Protecting the skin from excessive sun exposure
- Avoiding harmful or unregulated cosmetic



Kikelomo Opatola is a visionary leader, Convener of Skintervention Africa, and a Technologist with expertise in project delivery. She is a Derma Epidemiologist and Public Health Specialist dedicated to advancing skin health awareness, hygiene education, and preventive dermatological care.

With over two decades of experience across healthcare, FMCG, pharmaceuticals, and the industrial and medical gases sectors, Kikelomo brings a distinctive blend of scientific insight, strategic thinking, and leadership excellence. She is widely recognised for translating public health intelligence into practical business and community impact.

She is the author of *Becoming Woman*, a transformational work focused on identity, growth, and purposeful living, and the Founder of *Leadership Evolved*; a platform committed to raising bold, self-aware, and influential leaders for a dynamic world.

Kikelomo continues to drive meaningful change at the intersection of health, leadership, and women's empowerment.

A woman's skin tone; whether deep, radiant, or light; is a natural biological expression shaped by melanin. It does not define her worth, her capability, or her confidence.

Skin Health as Self-Care and Self-Leadership

products

- Observing skin changes and seeking professional advice when necessary

These everyday habits significantly improve long-term skin health. More importantly, they help women develop a respectful and informed relationship with their own bodies; recognising that skin care is an integral part of overall well-being.

Educating the Next Generation

If we are committed to raising confident and influential women, we must start with early education.

Young girls should grow up understanding that skin health is not about altering their natural appearance; it is about protecting and nurturing who they are.

They should be taught that:

- Healthy skin is not the same as lighter skin
- Natural skin tones are beautiful and worthy of pride
- Hygiene and nutrition play critical roles in skin health
- Quick beauty fixes can cause long-term damage

When girls are equipped with this knowledge early, they grow into women who are less vulnerable to harmful beauty pressures and more confident in their identity.

Skin Health Is Public Health

Skin conditions are not only personal concerns; they are

public health issues.

In many communities, preventable skin infections are linked to poor sanitation, overcrowding, limited access to clean water, and inadequate hygiene practices. Children in underserved areas often suffer from conditions that could be prevented through simple hygiene education and access to basic care.

This is why skin health awareness must extend beyond individual routines. It must include community education, preventive strategies, and accessible health information. Through public health advocacy, communities can better understand how to prevent common skin conditions, recognise early warning signs, and seek appropriate care when needed.

The Skin of a Bold Woman

A bold woman does not define herself by unrealistic beauty standards. She understands that her skin reflects her health, her environment, her experiences, and her resilience.

Her skin may carry freckles, stretch marks, scars, or rich melanin tones – each one telling a story of growth and strength.

Being whole means embracing health in its entirety. Being influential means sharing knowledge that empowers others.

Being bold means choosing authenticity over societal pressure.

The skin you live in deserves care, protection, and respect. When women understand their skin, they step into a deeper level of confidence; and become powerful influences within their families and communities.

Join the Skin Health Awareness Movement

Improving skin health awareness requires collective effort; from professionals, families, educators, and community leaders, including advocates championing women's growth and development across platforms.

Women are powerful agents of change. By sharing accurate knowledge about skin care and hygiene, we can reduce preventable skin conditions and build healthier communities.

To learn more about skin health education, awareness initiatives, and community programmes, visit www.skinterventionnigeria.com or reach out via +234 706 139 4918.

Together, we can promote healthier skin practices, empower women with knowledge, and raise a generation that understands that true beauty begins with health, confidence, and self-respect.

Mental Health Tips FOR Busy Women



*Written by Mary Ayuba;
Psychologist & Mental
Health Advocate
@ Mentally Literate Africa*



It's very easy to be caught up in a lot of things as women. Between work deadlines, family responsibilities, social obligations, and the endless mental load of keeping everything running, it's easy to put your own wellbeing at the very bottom of the list. But here's one truth you will often hear: you cannot pour from an empty cup. Taking care of your mental health is a necessity, not luxury and guess what; it doesn't have to be complicated.

Here are some simple, practical tips to help you protect your peace, even on the busiest of days. I know these are things you already know but reading them here again should remind you to prioritize your mental health.

1. Give yourself permission to rest

Many women have been conditioned to equate busyness with worth, but constantly running on empty takes a real toll on your mind and body. When was the last time you had a 10-minute nap, an early bedtime, or just simply sitting quietly with a cup of tea... doing nothing? When! Rest is not meant to be a reward for hard work! It's what makes you. Schedule it like you would any important meeting, because it is one.

2. Set boundaries and protect them

The word "NO" is a complete sentence. One of the most powerful things you can do for your

mental health is to get clear on what you will and won't accept – at work, in relationships, and with your own time. Boundaries are not walls; they're simply the lines that keep you healthy. Start small: decline one thing this week that you would normally say yes to out of guilt. Like that popular nursery rhyme goes: Do not say Yes, when you mean to say No.

3. Move your body, even a little

You don't need a gym membership or a two-hour workout routine. A 15-minute walk, a quick stretch between meetings, or dancing to one song in your kitchen counts. Move your body! You are not a tree. Physical movement is one of the most accessible and effective mood boosters there is. It releases tension, clears your head, and reminds you that you live in a body worth caring for.

4. Talk to someone you trust

Some people say they cannot trust anybody, due to their past experiences and while that may be understandable, it doesn't rule out the fact that you cannot do life alone. There is strength in vulnerability. You need a close friend, a family member, or a therapist, to talk to when life gets overwhelming. You might be carrying weights you probably didn't even know about and talking to the right person can help you

make it feel lighter. If therapy feels out of reach right now, journaling your thoughts can help. Getting feelings out of your head and onto paper or out of your mouth; creates space to breathe.

5. Disconnect to reconnect with yourself

Put the damn phone down! Read a book and talk to human beings. Those were the words of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie in one of her viral clips. Constant notifications, comparison culture, and the pressure to always be "on" can quietly erode your mental wellbeing. Try setting a daily window; even just 30 minutes; where you put your phone down and do something that genuinely brings you joy. Read, cook, pray, create. Time offline is time spent with yourself, and that relationship matters most.

Finally, you are not meant to do everything alone, all the time, perfectly. Give yourself the same grace and compassion you so freely offer others. Your mental health matters; not just so you can show up for everyone else, but because you deserve to thrive too.



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Emmanuella Imo
Akubuko
Communication
s Expert &
Strategist |

Social Entrepreneur |
International Speaker

Emmanuella Imo Akubuko is a distinguished social entrepreneur, nonprofit communications consultant, and international speaker dedicated to driving meaningful social change across Africa and beyond.

Is AI Really Coming For Our Jobs?

A communications expert's honest take on working alongside artificial intelligence; and why you should stop panicking.

Let me set the scene. It is 8 a.m. I have three client briefs due, a press release that needs a full rewrite, and a media pitch that just is not landing. I open my laptop, pull up an AI tool, and within minutes I have a solid first draft to react to. Did AI take my job? No. Did it save me two hours so I could think strategically? Absolutely.

This is the conversation we need to be having; not the doom-and-gloom headlines, but the real, lived experience of what AI actually means for women building careers today.

"AI didn't replace my expertise. It cleared the clutter so my expertise could shine."

The Fear Is Real – But Is It Accurate?

Every other week, a new report drops warning that AI will eliminate millions of jobs.

And yes, if your entire role consists of producing templated content with zero strategic input, that is a fair concern. But here is what those headlines conveniently leave out: they said the same thing about spreadsheets, email, and the internet. Yet here we are.

The roles that will shrink are those built entirely around execution without judgment. The roles that will grow – and this is the part that is not being said loudly enough – are the ones that require human nuance, relationship-building, creativity, and strategic thinking. Sound familiar? Because that is communication. That is marketing. That is leadership. That is what

most of us in this community are actually doing.

What AI Looks Like in My Day-to-Day

As a communications expert, I work with AI tools daily – and I will be honest, it took some adjustment. At first it felt like cheating. Then it felt like having a very fast, very literal junior team member who never sleeps and never needs feedback explained twice.

Here is what AI genuinely helps me with: generating first drafts of press releases that I then shape with brand voice; researching background information quickly before a client call; repurposing long-form content into social media captions; and brainstorming angles when I am creatively stuck at 6 p.m.

Here is what AI absolutely cannot do: understand the unspoken politics of a client relationship; know that a CEO dislikes a certain phrase because of a bad press cycle three years ago; read the room during a media crisis; or craft messaging that moves people emotionally. That last one? That is still one hundred percent human work; and in my experience, it is the most valuable work there is.

"The skill isn't learning to use AI. It's knowing when not to."

The Real Risk Nobody Talks About

Here is my honest concern – and it is not that AI will take our jobs. It is that women, especially those early in their careers, will begin to undervalue their own instincts because a machine sounds confident.

AI is trained on patterns. It optimises for what has worked before. It will never tell you to take the unconventional angle, challenge a client's brief, or walk away from a damaging opportunity. That judgment? That courage? That is entirely yours.

The women I have watched thrive in their careers are not the ones who resist AI, nor the ones who hand everything over to it.

They are the ones who use it as a tool to amplify their thinking; while staying firmly in the driver's seat.

So, What Should You Actually Do?

Get comfortable with the tools. ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Perplexity... experiment. You do not need to become a tech expert. You need to understand enough to direct these tools the way you would direct a team member.

Invest in the skills AI cannot replicate. Stakeholder relationships, strategic counsel, cultural intelligence, ethical judgment, creativity that challenges conventions; double down on these. Take the course, pitch for the speaking opportunity, and build the network.

Reframe the question. Instead of asking, "Will AI take my job?" ask, "How do I use AI to do my job better than anyone else could?" That mental shift changes everything.

The bottom line? AI is a tool. A powerful, occasionally impressive, sometimes frustrating tool; like every technology that came before it. What it cannot replicate is you: your judgment, your relationships, your instincts, and your voice.

So no, AI is not coming for your job. But complacency might be.

Stay curious. Stay sharp. Keep building.

PURPOSE IS NOT FOUND. IT IS BUILT.

By Hope Adewole Executive Director,
HAC Consulting | Vision Strategist |
Raising Purposeful Visionary Leaders



Hope Adewole is the Executive Director of HAC Consulting and a Vision Strategist dedicated to raising purposeful, visionary leaders. With ten years of experience walking the path of purpose herself, she coaches and holds visionaries accountable to their clarity; helping them move from inspiration to lasting impact.

For decades, we have been told to find our purpose.

The phrase sounds inspiring, but it quietly carries a dangerous assumption; that purpose is hidden somewhere outside of us, waiting to be discovered like a lost object.

So people spend years searching.

They wait for a defining moment. They hope for a sudden revelation. They expect a dramatic sense of certainty before they begin living meaningfully.

But what if the entire premise is flawed?
What if purpose is not something you find?
What if purpose is something you build?

The Myth of the Perfect Discovery

The idea that purpose arrives fully formed has created unnecessary frustration for many people. They believe life will suddenly make sense once they "discover" their calling. But in reality, very few people experience purpose that way.

This year, 2026, marks ten years on my own journey of purpose. And on this tenth step of the ladder, the clarity I once struggled to find is only now fully manifesting and revealing itself.

Today, I can say that my life is beginning to resemble the purpose I once envisioned, desired, and deeply longed for. But what you see today is the accumulation of a decade of journeying; ten years of moving forward imperfectly, ten years of doing things somehow and anyhow, ten years of staying committed to a path where I knew the

destination but had very little understanding of how to get there.

What sustained me was faith; the quiet conviction that every small, consistent action would eventually lead me closer to the bigger picture.

I started as what I often call a **purpose crusader**. Even though I knew, ten years ago, that my vision involved training, coaching, and holding visionaries accountable to their clarity, the early years did not look like consulting or structured programmes. For nearly five years, my work was simply inspiring people, educating them, and creating awareness around purpose and clarity.

Ten years later, I launched my consulting organisation, **HAC Consulting** – a living expression of the very vision I had carried for a decade and worked toward consistently. Today, that vision has taken shape in a way that closely reflects the map I once held only in my heart.

I remain deeply grateful that I chose to begin with the small spark of light I had at the time. As I kept moving, that light only grew clearer.

Clarity Deepens in Motion

Purpose rarely arrives as a complete blueprint. Instead, it begins as fragments; interests, values, problems we care about, talents that come naturally, and experiences that shape our perspective. These fragments are not accidents. They are clues. But clues only become meaningful when we choose to engage them intentionally.

Purpose Is Revealed Through Participation

Many people want clarity before they take action. They want assurance before they commit. But clarity rarely comes before movement; it comes through movement.

A person may not realise they are passionate about mentoring until they help someone overcome a challenge. An entrepreneur may not see their calling until they begin solving a problem others consistently face. Purpose

often reveals itself while we are in motion, not while we are waiting.

Those who are willing to engage life, experiment with their gifts, and contribute where they can often find that their sense of purpose grows clearer over time. Purpose is less like discovering a hidden map and more like walking a path that gradually reveals itself as you go.

Purpose Requires Intentional Design

Even when someone gains clarity about their calling, another challenge appears; translating that clarity into impact.

Knowing what matters is not enough. Purpose without structure quickly becomes frustration. Many people feel deeply connected to a mission but lack the systems, discipline, and intentional habits required to consistently express it. Without structure, purpose remains an idea rather than a lived reality.

Purpose answers the question of *why*. Structure answers the question of *how*.

When both work together, purpose moves from inspiration to influence.

The Responsibility of Purpose

Purpose is not simply a discovery – it is a responsibility.

It requires self-awareness, commitment, and the willingness to refine one's path over time. It evolves as we grow, gain experience, and respond to new opportunities for impact.

The individuals who live with the strongest sense of purpose are not necessarily the ones who had a dramatic moment of discovery. They are the ones who took responsibility for the gifts, convictions, and opportunities placed in their lives – and chose to develop them intentionally.

Purpose, in that sense, is not waiting to be found.

It is waiting to be built.

When Motherhood Meets Purpose:

There is a quiet question many women carry; especially mothers:

"Can I truly build a meaningful career while nurturing a home, raising children, and honouring the different seasons of my life?"

That question grows even louder when considering a transition into tech; a space often perceived as fast-paced, demanding, and reserved for a select few.

But the truth is this: the tech space is not reserved for a particular kind of woman. It is open to every woman willing to learn, grow, and embrace possibility; even in the midst of motherhood.

Motherhood Is Not a Limitation; It Is a Lens

Motherhood teaches resilience, adaptability, patience, and emotional intelligence; qualities that are not only valuable in life but deeply needed in the tech ecosystem.

Yet many women feel compelled to press pause on their ambitions when motherhood begins. The long nights, the physical demands, the emotional shifts; it can feel as though there is no room left for anything else.

But what if motherhood is not the end of a journey, but the beginning of a redefined one? What if the very skills developed in nurturing life are the same skills required to build impactful products, lead teams, and solve real-world problems?

You Do Not Have to Start From Scratch

One of the most common misconceptions

Redefining a Woman's Path Into Tech

about transitioning into tech is the belief that it requires starting over completely. It does not.

Women from diverse backgrounds; education, healthcare, business, administration; already possess transferable skills that are highly relevant in tech. Communication, problem-solving, organisation, leadership, empathy, decision-making. These are not secondary skills. They are core competencies.

For mothers seeking flexible and sustainable career paths, several non-coding roles offer strong entry points: Product Management, Project Management, Product Marketing, Product Design (UI/UX), and Quality Assurance. None of these demand a traditional technical background; but all of them reward structured thinking, empathy, and clarity. Qualities most women have already developed through life itself.

The Reality of the Journey

It is important to approach this path honestly. The early stages can be challenging; self-doubt, rejection, learning curves that feel overwhelming, and exhaustion, especially alongside the responsibilities of motherhood.

But growth in tech follows a recognisable pattern: the beginning is often the hardest, consistency creates momentum, and over time, competence builds confidence.

Rather than chasing the elusive idea of "balance," what most women learn to

practise is intentional prioritisation; knowing what matters most in each season, creating structure where possible, and extending grace where needed. Some days will lean more into family. Some days will demand more from work. Some days will simply require rest. This is not failure. This is the rhythm. Own it.

A Story of Possibility

I know this path is possible because I have walked it.

My journey into tech did not begin at a convenient time. I was a new mother; my baby barely two months old; trying to understand what my new normal even looked like. The sleepless nights were real. The adjustments were overwhelming. And yet, there was a quiet desire in my heart: I wanted more. More growth... More impact... More possibilities.

So I made a decision that did not make perfect sense at the time. I chose to transition into tech; not because I had everything figured out, not because I had the time, but because I was willing to start.

I stepped into Product Management, learning in between everything else; between feeding, resting, and showing up for my family. It was not perfectly structured, but it was consistent. Six months later, I landed my first Product Management role at

Evenly. Shortly after, I moved to Mainstack, a global social commerce company, where I built products at a broader scale. Alongside my role, I began mentoring aspiring product managers and eventually founded Product Pointers, a mentorship community born from everything I was learning.

In the middle of all of this, life kept happening. I completed my MBA. I received global certifications. I kept building. I kept showing up for my family. And recently, I welcomed my second child.

It has not been easy. There were days I felt stretched, tired, and uncertain. But one thing remained constant; I kept going. Not perfectly, but intentionally.

So when I say this is a story of possibility, I mean it as lived evidence: that even in the middle of motherhood, even in the middle of uncertainty, even when life feels impossibly full; you can still grow. You can still start. You can still become.

The Courage to Begin

For many women, this journey is not just practical; it is deeply spiritual. It requires faith to begin without full clarity, faith to keep going despite uncertainty, and faith to believe that growth is possible even in the most demanding seasons.

As it is written: **"For we walk by faith, not by sight."** – 2 Cor. 5:7

Purpose is rarely found in standing still. It reveals itself in motion; not in waiting, not in perfection, but in starting. And sometimes, the courage to begin is the very thing that unlocks everything that follows.

You are not behind. You are not disqualified. You do not have to have it all figured out.

Start with what you have. Build with what you know. Learn as you go.

Motherhood does not cancel ambition. It refines it. And you do not have to choose between who you are becoming and who you are raising.

You can hold both.



Blessing Okomor is a Product Manager, mentor, and community builder passionate about opening doors for women in tech. She is the Founder of Product Pointers, a mentorship platform for aspiring product managers. Alongside a thriving career at Evenly and Mainstack, she holds an MBA and champions the belief that motherhood and professional ambition are not in conflict; they are companions.

10 Books

EVERY WOMAN SHOULD READ TO BUILD A LIFE THAT LASTS

There's a kind of woman who is no longer impressed by growth that looks good on the surface but lacks depth underneath. She is not just interested in becoming more, she is committed to becoming whole.

She understands that a life of substance is not built by chance, but by intention, and one of the most powerful ways to build that kind of life is through what she consistently feeds her mind.

Reading does something profound for us. It allows us to sit with people who have lived through things we may never have to experience firsthand, and yet we still gain wisdom. It stretches our thinking, refines our perspective, and in many ways shortens the distance between where we are and who we are becoming. When a woman reads with intention, she is not just consuming words, she is shaping her identity, strengthening her voice, and expanding her capacity for life.

With that in mind, this is a carefully considered collection of books that speak to the different dimensions of a woman's life. From the inner work that grounds her, to the courage required to lead, to the wisdom needed to build relationships and steward resources well, each of these books offers something that helps a woman not just rise, but rise rooted.

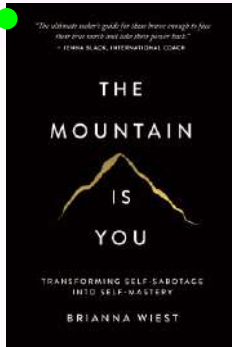
As you move through these books, it is important to remember that growth is not a race and it is not a performance. It is a process of becoming more aware, more grounded, and more aligned with the life you are called to live. These books will not do the work for you, but they will guide you, stretch you, and in many ways, walk with you.

And that is what makes the difference. Not just rising, but rising from a place that is deeply rooted.



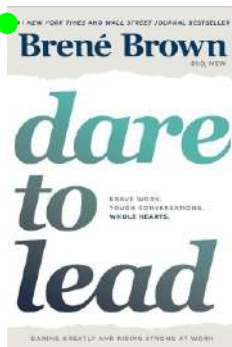
Written by:

El-Shalom Unwobuachi Amobi-Okidika – a Personal Transformation Strategist who equips individuals to achieve clarity, emotional wholeness, and purposeful living. She blends personal development, identity work, and practical transformation tools.



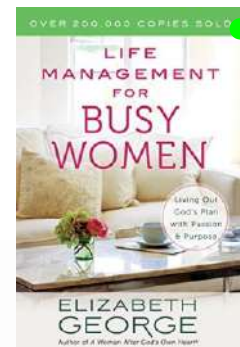
The Mountain Is You by Brianna Wiest is a deeply reflective work that helps you confront the often uncomfortable truth that many of the barriers you face are internal. It walks you through the patterns of self-sabotage in a way that is both honest and compassionate, offering a pathway toward emotional maturity and self-mastery. It is the kind of book that invites you to take responsibility for your growth without shame, and that balance is powerful.

In **Daring Greatly, Brené Brown** challenges the idea that strength is found in perfection or control, and instead makes a compelling case for vulnerability as the true measure of courage. Through research and storytelling, she shows how choosing to show up fully, even when there are no guarantees, is what ultimately leads to a meaningful and connected life.

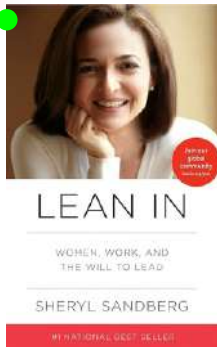


Dare to Lead, also by Brené Brown, extends that conversation into the world of leadership, redefining what it means to lead in a way that is both effective and deeply human. It speaks to women who are navigating influence, responsibility, and impact, reminding them that leadership is less about authority and more about courage, clarity, and integrity.

Life Management for Busy Women by Elizabeth George brings a sense of structure to the often overwhelming demands of daily life. It offers practical guidance on managing time, energy, and priorities in a way that aligns with your values, helping you move from a place of constant busyness to one of intentional living.

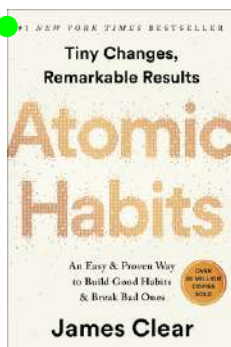
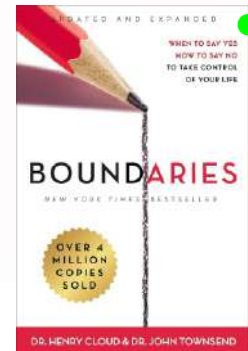


SheVolve by Dr. Ezinne Okwulehie carries a different kind of weight, one that is rooted in lived experience. Drawing from her personal journey through loss and rebuilding, she shares a framework that helps women rise from places of pain, stagnation, or brokenness. It is honest, it is grounding, and it offers both language and direction for women who are learning how to begin again.



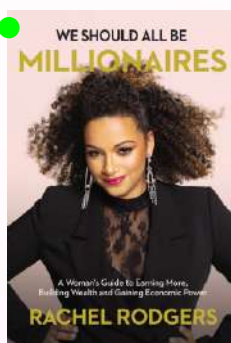
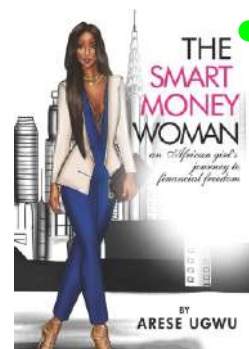
In **Lean In**, **Sheryl Sandberg** opens up an important conversation about women, ambition, and leadership. She addresses the internal and external barriers that often hold women back, while encouraging them to take their seat at the table with confidence and clarity. It is both a personal reflection and a cultural commentary that continues to resonate.

Boundaries by **Henry Cloud (with John Townsend)** is one of those foundational books that reshapes how you relate with people. It teaches, with clarity and depth, that love and limits can coexist, and that learning to say no is not a rejection of others but often an act of self-respect and emotional responsibility.



Atomic Habits by **James Clear** brings the conversation down to the daily level, showing how small, consistent actions compound over time to create significant change. It shifts the focus from dramatic transformation to sustainable growth, which is often what truly leads to lasting results.

The Smart Money Woman by **Arese Ugwu** approaches financial intelligence through storytelling, making it both relatable and practical. It walks through the realities of money management, debt, savings, and lifestyle choices in a way that feels close to home, especially for women navigating similar contexts.



Finally, **We Should All Be Millionaires** by **Rachel Rodgers** challenges deeply held beliefs about money and wealth. It calls women to expand their thinking, own their value, and approach wealth-building not with fear or hesitation, but with boldness and strategy.



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Financial Literacy 101:

Unleashing Your Power With Money

By Esther Odejobi

Personal Finance Coach |
Content Creator | Community Builder

Money & Entrepreneurship



Let me be honest with you," she said quietly, stirring her drink.

"I make money, but I do not know where it goes."

That moment stayed with me. Not because it was shocking; but because it was familiar. So many women are doing their best: working hard, earning, showing up for their families, supporting others. But behind the scenes, there is confusion, pressure, and sometimes even fear when it comes to money. And in a season where we are called to step into excellence, audacity, success, and healing, we cannot afford to ignore our finances. Because the truth is, money touches everything — your peace, your choices, your confidence, and your future.

Financial literacy is not about becoming obsessed with money. It's about no longer being controlled by it.

One of the biggest misconceptions is that financial struggles come from not earning enough. But more often than not, they come from a lack of structure. You can earn

well and still feel stuck if there is no clarity on where your money is going or what it is meant to do for you.

I have seen women avoid checking their account balances because it triggers anxiety. Others give generously but without boundaries, leaving themselves drained and taken advantage of. Some watch their expenses rise just as quickly as their income. And many delay investing because they believe they need "more money" to start. But money doesn't respond to good intentions, it responds to systems.

Start With Honesty

If you ever feel financially lost, the answer is not to panic or compare yourself to others. It is to return to the basics; honestly.

Start by understanding your current reality. How much do you earn? Where is it going? What do you actually want your money to do for you?

Clarity changes everything. From there, begin simply. Track your expenses for a few weeks; not to judge yourself, but to understand your patterns. Create a basic structure for your

money. It does not have to be complicated. Know what goes toward your needs, what you spend for enjoyment, and what you are setting aside for your future

Saving vs. Investing: What Is the Difference?

A question that comes up often is how to balance saving and investing.

Think of saving as protection and investing as growth. Saving gives you stability; it is what stands between you and panic when life happens unexpectedly. Investing is what builds your future and allows your money to grow over time.

If you are just starting out, focus on building your savings first; particularly an emergency fund. This is one of the most underrated forms of financial confidence. Knowing that you have money set aside for unexpected situations changes how you move through life. It gives you peace of mind.

Start small if you need to. It is not about the amount in the beginning; it is about consistency. Over time, aim to

build a fund that can cover three to six months of your essential expenses.

Then begin to explore investing. And no, investing is not reserved for experts or the wealthy. It is simply about putting your money in places where it can grow. Start with what you understand. There are simple, beginner-friendly options available today, and the most important thing is not to rush into anything you do not fully trust.

Ask questions. Do your research. Start small. Stay consistent. Even modest amounts invested regularly can grow into something meaningful over time. What matters most is that you begin.

Dealing With Debt

For many women, debt is another layer of this conversation; and it can feel heavy, even embarrassing. But it is important to remember that debt is not a life sentence. It is a situation that can be worked through with a plan.

The first step is to face it fully. List out what you owe, understand the terms, and decide on a strategy to pay it down. Two popular approaches are the **snowball method** – starting with the smallest debts first to build momentum and confidence – and the **avalanche method** – focusing on debts with the highest interest rates to save more money over time. What matters most is consistency: staying committed to whichever plan you choose.

And as you work through debt,

give yourself grace. Growth is happening, even when it feels slow.

Planning for the Future

Another area many women tend to postpone is long-term planning; particularly retirement. It often feels distant, something to think about later. But the earlier you start, the easier it becomes.

Time plays a powerful role in building wealth. Even small, consistent contributions toward long-term investments can make a significant difference over the years. The goal is to create a future where you have options; where rest is a choice, not a luxury.



Growing Through the Seasons

As you grow, your financial priorities will evolve. In your early years, the focus is on awareness; understanding money, building discipline, and avoiding unnecessary debt. As you progress, the emphasis shifts to increasing income, growing investments, and acquiring assets. Later, it becomes about preserving wealth and building stability.

But beyond age or stage, the real goal is simple: to be in control. To make decisions from a place of

knowledge, not fear. To give, spend, save, and invest with intention.

I have seen women completely transform their financial lives; not because they suddenly had access to millions, but because they decided to learn, to become aware, and to take small, consistent steps in the right direction. That is what financial literacy does. It does not just change your bank account; it changes how you think, how you plan, and how you show up in the world.

So if you are reading this feeling unsure, overwhelmed, or behind... this is your reminder that you can start from exactly where you are. You can rewrite your financial story.

Start with one step. Track your money. Set a goal. Save something. Learn something new about investing. Make one better decision than you did last month.

This is your season to truly unleash; not just in your dreams and ambitions, but in your financial life too.

About the Writer

Esther Odejobi is a personal finance coach passionate about helping individuals build clarity, structure, and confidence with their money. Through her content and community, she simplifies financial concepts and creates a space where women can grow financially; without pressure or confusion. Connect with her on Instagram and TikTok @theesther.oj and on YouTube at Esther Odejobi.

From Idea to Launch:

How I Turned What I Loved Into a Thriving Business

By Jemima Ayeni

Event Planner | Caterer |
Gift Curator | Entrepreneur

I did not wake up one day and decide, "I am going to start a business."

Honestly, I was already doing the work long before I called it one.

I have always had a natural flair for planning events — organising, coordinating, bringing ideas to life. It came easily to me, and I did it often. But I never saw it as something I could actually build into a business. Catering, on the other hand, was my steady ground. I had been in that space for over seven years. It was consistent, reliable, and something I took seriously.

But it was not until about five years ago that I paused and asked myself: what if I gave all of this some structure? What if I created a brand that people could truly connect with?

That moment changed everything.

Today, my business spans three areas: event planning and management, catering services, and gift curation and packaging. But beyond the services themselves, what I really offer is peace of mind. I help people bring their visions to life without the stress that usually comes with it. Whether it is a wedding, a corporate function, or an intimate celebration, my goal is to make every experience seamless and memorable.

Getting here was not as glamorous as it might sound. My first step was clarity. I had to really picture who I was serving — my ideal

client — and understand what they needed. Then came research. I paid close attention to what was already out there and asked myself where I could genuinely stand out.

Funding was another challenge, but I was fortunate. I pitched my idea to a family friend who believed in me enough to support my vision. That early backing played a significant role in getting me started.

Entrepreneurship has always been my dream. I have never been drawn to the idea of working for someone else long-term.

MY WORD TO EVERY WOMAN SITTING ON AN IDEA

Do not overthink it. Do not wait for everything to be perfect. Too much analysis will keep you stuck. Put your idea to work, learn as you go, and grow from there. Because sometimes, the thing you have been doing so effortlessly all along; the thing that feels almost too natural to be called a skill; might just be the business you have been waiting to build.



Jemima Ayeni is an entrepreneur based in Nigeria whose business spans event planning and management, catering, and gift curation. With over seven years of experience and a passion for creating seamless, memorable experiences, she helps individuals and organisations bring their visions to life; without the stress.

I wanted to build something of my own; something that wouldn't just sustain me, but also create opportunities for others.

That said, the journey has not been without its difficulties. One of my biggest ongoing challenges is attracting the kind of clients that bring consistent, high-value business; the kind that truly helps you break through to the next level. Funding to scale is another constant consideration. Growth requires resources, and that can sometimes feel like the steepest hurdle of all.

If I could go back, there is one thing I would change: I would have started earlier, and I would have charged for my services sooner.

I gave so much away for free in those early days, not fully realising the value of what I had. Even if it was just a small amount, I should have placed a price on my work from the beginning. But I do not regret it. Those experiences shaped me, sharpened my skills, and built the confidence I carry today.

Now, I'm proud to say that my business generates over 10x the startup profit annually, and I am just getting started. This year, the focus is on scaling higher, reaching new markets, and expanding the impact of what I have built.

From Idea to Launch:

Startup Stories

What's your business and what problem does it solve?

My name is Boluwatife Akindiya of Tife Fashion Stores. I own a fashion store that helps small start-ups grow and expand into large-scale businesses through our low minimum order packages. Tife Fashion Stores specializes in delivering affordable stock shoes by selling factory production lots, which has helped many business owners sell the same quality as UK brands at a very subsidised rate.

How did the idea come to you?

The idea to start selling shoes came from my hostel mate during my undergraduate years. We started selling together as undergraduates; the items were thrift, sales were low, and there were many challenges — I ended up having to dispose of a lot of the shoes. But that didn't discourage me. I re-strategised and decided to start selling brand-new ones in wholesale only, and that was how I scaled up. In fact, I once exhibited at the MultiWoman Conference a few years ago.

How long have you been in business?

I have been in business for 8 years now.

What were your first steps from idea to launch and what would you advise anyone who wants to start a business.

When the idea to start selling shoes came to me, I discussed it with a few people, and someone tried to discourage me by pointing out the challenges. I decided I was

going to do it regardless of any challenge. That same person now sells shoes to this day. Sales were slow, people bought on credit, and business wasn't moving as expected when I started; but I didn't give up.

The first step when you want to launch an idea is to do it immediately. When you get an idea, act on it immediately; don't procrastinate. Don't wait for a better time. Research and study those who are already doing it and do it anyway; you will figure it out eventually. Everyone was once a novice in business. You can't figure out everything at once as a starter, so don't be hard on yourself.

Start with what you have and scale up as you grow. Don't wait for a grand announcement.

Have you always wanted to be an entrepreneur?

Yes! Right from secondary school, I noticed in myself that I really love buying and selling. I derive so much joy from it. I have been selling since JSS1. I remember we once had pure water for sale at home, and I decided to join the people who came to buy and hawk it too. I once sold over 10 bags in a day – one by one, not in bulk.

What was your biggest obstacle?

My biggest obstacle in business was when I pre-ordered goods worth millions of naira on behalf of customers, and a large number of them got destroyed in a fire at my shipping company's warehouse in 2025. Almost 100 cartons of my personal stock were lost to the fire, and we still refunded every affected customer. It wasn't an easy period for me, but God came through and people also supported.

Business will bring its own challenges, but don't give up too soon.

Where did you get your startup capital?

I started my business with my savings from my IT internship. Use what you have now! Don't wait until you have millions to start that business.

What's one thing you wish you knew before starting?

I wish I had started early enough and used social media for business purposes. I was posting without a strategy for years until I finally figured it out.

I wish I had taken courses earlier and learned the basics of selling online.

I learnt and figured out so many things on my own.

I am grateful to God for the growth of Tife Fashion Stores. Because we chose not to give up, the business is doing so well, regardless of all the challenges we have faced in the past few months.

What's your advice for aspiring entrepreneurs?

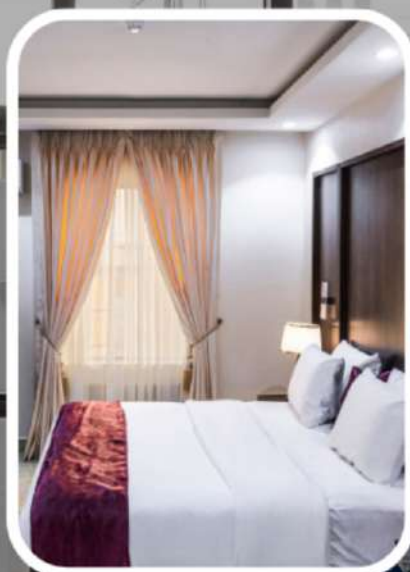
My advice to aspiring entrepreneurs is to start that business now. There is no better time – start with whatever little capital you have, and bring the zeal and hunger for success.

That will be the fuel that keeps your business moving.

Entrepreneurship is a tough-sweet yet rewarding journey. I hope you have your breakthrough sooner rather than later.

Rooting for you always ❤️ ❤️ ❤️





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F A S H I O N

COVERED IN CONFIDENCE:

Written by Esther Ukwelenwa

HOW MODEST
FASHION IS
REDEFINING
STYLE AND
POWER

In a world where fashion often leans toward the bold and revealing, a quiet revolution is taking place, one that proves style doesn't have to sacrifice sophistication. At the heart of this shift is modest fashion, a movement that is reshaping how women present themselves to the world.

Far from being restrictive, dressing modestly is greatly versatile, allowing you to incorporate simplicity and elegance in one outfit in ways that align with your values without compromising on style. Eleanor Roosevelt once said "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent".

Modest fashion has evolved beyond cultural or religious associations to become a global style phenomenon. Women are embracing longer hemlines, higher necklines, and looser silhouettes not because they have to, but because they choose to.

Modest fashion is now becoming a global standard. Celebrities and influencers have also helped normalize and even glamorize modest styles, while luxury brands and independent designers are launching modest fashion collections to meet growing demand.

Modest Fashion Weeks, held in cities like London, Istanbul, Dubai and Jakarta, have further spotlighted this movement, bringing together designers, models and global audiences to showcase how modesty and style can coexist beautifully on the runway.

Tips for Styling Modest Clothing

In the creative playground of modest fashion, the key is to balance coverage with aesthetics. One of the most versatile and flattering tools in modest dressing is a flowy silhouette. Rather than clingy or tight clothing, opt for garments that gently skim the body, like wide-leg trousers, pleated skirts, A-line dresses with high neck line or kimono-style jackets. These pieces offer freedom of movement, visual elegance and effortless comfort.

Remember that flow doesn't mean shapeless; look for designs with a defined waist or subtle tailoring to create balance and avoid overwhelming your frame.

Embrace Elegant Color Palettes

Modest fashion thrives in sophisticated, harmonious color stories. While bold colors can be fun, embracing elegant palettes gives your wardrobe timeless appeal.

Earth tone like browns (chocolate, tan, taupe) or **Neutrals** like ivory, beige, charcoal and navy form a flexible foundation. You can then build on this with **soft pastels or muted jewel tones** like sage green, dusty rose, burgundy or steel blue.

Monochromatic outfits (wearing different tones of the same color) can elongate the silhouette and feel effortlessly chic. Avoid harsh contrasts if your goal is a more cohesive, modest aesthetic.



Accessories also play a crucial role. A carefully chosen scarf, handbag, or pair of shoes can tie an entire look together. In modest fashion, these details are not just additions, they elevate even the simplest outfits, turning them into expressions of personal style.

Modest Clothing Outfit Ideas for Women

Whether you're getting dressed for a regular day, a formal event or a sunny getaway, evening or dinner setting, modest fashion offers endless styling possibilities. Daily dressing doesn't have to be complicated or dull. Hot weather calls for light fabrics and loose cuts. Ideal modest summer outfits include linen co-ords, tiered maxi dresses. Pair them with light scarves, wide-brim hats and minimalist sandals for a chic, breathable look that respects both heat and modesty.

Breaking Stereotypes, Building Identity

One of the most powerful aspects of modest fashion is its ability to challenge stereotypes. It proves that covering up does not mean blending in or limiting oneself. Instead, it opens up a new dimension of fashion, one that values creativity, individuality, and intention.

Women who embrace modest fashion are reclaiming the narrative, showing that style and empowerment are not dictated by trends, but by choice. They are building

identities that are both fashionable and meaningful, blending modern influences with personal values.

The Future of Fashion is Inclusive

As the fashion industry continues to evolve, modest fashion is playing a key role in pushing for inclusivity and diversity. It is expanding the definition of beauty and style, making room for different perspectives and preferences.

This movement is not just a passing trend, it is a reflection of a broader cultural shift toward authenticity and self-expression. Modest fashion is here to stay, continuing to inspire women to dress in ways that align with who they are.

In redefining style and power, modest fashion reminds us that true confidence doesn't come from what is revealed, but from what is felt within. And that, in itself, is the most powerful statement a woman can make.

Esther Ukwelenwa also known as Esther UK is a dynamic and multi-talented professional, she effortlessly blends creativity and expertise across beauty, fashion, and entertainment. As a skilled hairstylist, trendsetting fashion icon, and engaging compere and host, she brings confidence, style, and charisma to every stage she graces.

Renowned for her excellence and versatility, she is a true master of her craft and a standout force in her field.



YOU CAN **BE** MORE

PST TOBE NNADOZIE



The journey of a young lady is shaped by numerous expectations, especially in societies where gender roles are still evolving. Having seen the impact a single encouraging phrase can have on my daughters, siblings, wife, and mother, I know that every young lady can truly BE MORE, with the right mind-set and practical steps. This paper provides hands-on advice, rooted in Scripture, to help girls and young women unlock their potential in life, ministry, and career.

Before we talk about the advice, it is important to explain what being MORE is. It is not being defined by your gender in achieving God's plans and purpose for your life. It is being willing to have a dream that does not frighten you alone, but makes everyone around you shake and even quake. Being more is achieving beyond the ordinary. It is a willingness to stretch your skills and abilities to achieve what God has in store for you.

If no one has mentioned this to you, you can be really MORE. I have seen young ladies transform from being an abused girl, with a victim mentality and always being sidelined, to being a mature lady who sits at the head of the table, healed from the mental shackles and commanding the room. God has not given any lady a brain or capacity any less than men.

God's gifts are not gender-biased. They are given to sons and daughters based on God's own prerogative. And if God has given you a gift, He has definitely made a way for you to excel in the gift.

What are some things that you need to do so that you can continuously overcome the fear and barriers to excellence as a standard as a lady?

ASPIRE and ACCELERATE

Set Specific Goals: Start by writing down your aspirations. Whether it is excelling in school, becoming a leader in your church, or launching a business, clarity is the first step. For example, a young woman named Grace aspired to become a doctor. She created a vision board and mapped out the courses, exams, and internships required, reviewing her progress monthly. Are you a student, banker, Tech girl, Medical Practitioner, or any other career? Have a plan for what you want to achieve, and set a time-line for it.

Find Mentors: Seek out women who have walked the path you want to follow. Proverbs 27:17 says, "Iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." Mentors provide direction, feedback, and encouragement. In your church or community, approach someone whose achievements you admire and ask for guidance. The Multi-woman Conference has been held for a number of years, and the team organizes various programs to help you become more accountable and responsible. If you cannot find a mentor, find the right community.

Start Small, Accelerate Consistently: Don't wait for perfect conditions to begin. If you want to build confidence in public speaking, volunteer to lead a prayer or Bible reading at youth meetings. As you grow, take on bigger challenges. "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13) is your assurance that you are empowered for progression.

BELIEVE and BLESS

Affirm Your Identity in Christ: Every morning, declare God's promises over yourself. "You are fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14). This builds self-belief that transcends societal limitations. Affirmations have a way of reminding you about who you are in God and what you have been set-out by God to achieve. Develop your own daily and regular affirmations. Our mothers used Psalms as affirmations and they never joked

with their Psalm-based proclamations.

Share Encouragement: Bless others with your words and actions. For example, Esther believed she was called for a purpose and used her position to save her people (Esther 4:14). Write uplifting notes to friends, volunteer to help younger girls with their studies, or share Bible verses in a group. When you are a carrier of value and sharer, others end up giving you value too.

Give Back: Organize a food drive, start a book club, or teach a skill you've mastered. Real blessing comes from using your abilities to serve others. In Nigeria, a group of young ladies formed "Girls Leading Girls," a mentoring program that helps secondary school students develop academic and life skills.

CHARACTER and COMPETENCE

Daily Integrity Checks: Ask yourself each evening: Did I act honestly? Was I kind? Integrity is the foundation of lasting influence. Proverbs 31:10-31 showcases a woman whose character and competence bless her family and community. Being a multi-woman is also being a woman of integrity. Can you stand without compromise on your convictions? An integrity test will show who you truly are beyond the razzmatazz of your associations or professions.

Skill Building: Choose one skill to develop every quarter, coding, baking, leadership, or financial management. Attend workshops, watch online tutorials, and practice regularly. Ada Lovelace, for example, learned mathematics from a mentor and became the first computer programmer. Build yourself. Being a woman gives you an edge as a woman can easily multitask. Never be afraid to start something new.

Seek Constructive Feedback: After completing a project or task, ask for feedback from teachers, mentors, or peers. Use their advice to improve, showing humility and a commitment to excellence. It

is important to note that some feedbacks are not worth your consideration. Try every spirit and know who is for you and who cannot really add value to you, and be frank about cutting off valueless people in your life, even if you have to pay a price.

DEFEND and DETECT

Set Boundaries: Clearly communicate your values and limits. Deborah, the prophetess and judge, stood firm in her convictions (Judges 4:4–9). If you're pressured to compromise your principles, say "no" kindly but firmly.

Recognize Warning Signs: Detect situations or relationships that threaten your well-being. If a friend consistently belittles your ambitions, limit your exposure and seek healthier connections. Use discernment and prayer as your guide.

Stand Up for Others: When you see someone being oppressed, bullied, or excluded, step in to defend them. Form a "watch group" at school or in the church to support peers who may be vulnerable. This is not just to help others, it trains you on what to do when you are faced with a similar condition

ENVISION and ENLARGEMENT

Visualize Your Future: Isaiah 54:2–3 encourages, "Enlarge the place of your tent." Sketch out what you want your life to look like in five or ten years—career, ministry, family, and community.

Take Bold Steps: Dame Stephanie Shirley envisioned a tech company for women. She started small, recruited like-minded individuals, and eventually expanded globally. You can do the same, launch a club, organize a conference, or start a blog.

Collaborate for Greater Reach: Partner with others to multiply impact. Join networks or organizations that align with your goals. Pray for wisdom and divine connections, trusting God to bring the right people your

way.

The path to being MUCH MORE begins with practical steps and faith in action. Aspire courageously, believe in your worth, build strong character and competence, defend your values, and envision a life of impact and enlargement. "God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Ephesians 3:20). Take these steps today and witness transformation—in yourself and in the world around you.

*"Being more is
achieving beyond
the ordinary."*

*It is a willingness
to stretch your
skills and abilities
to achieve what God
has in store for you."*



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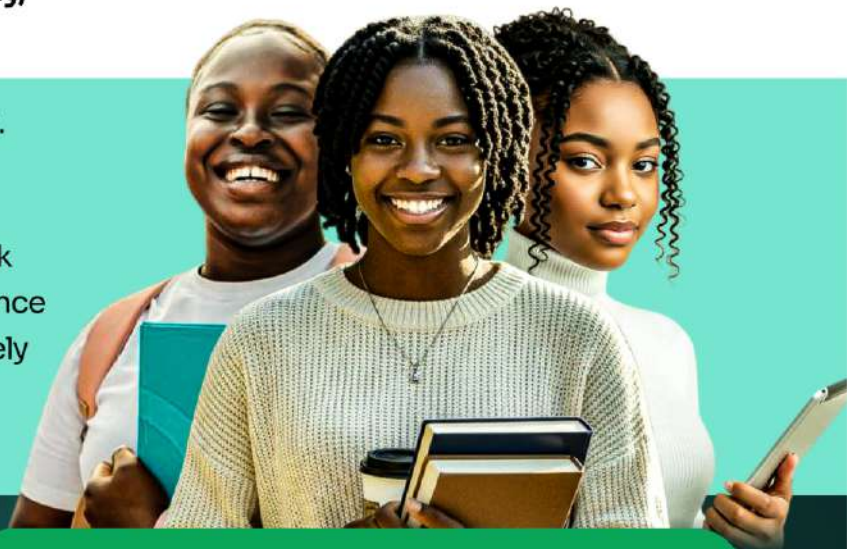
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