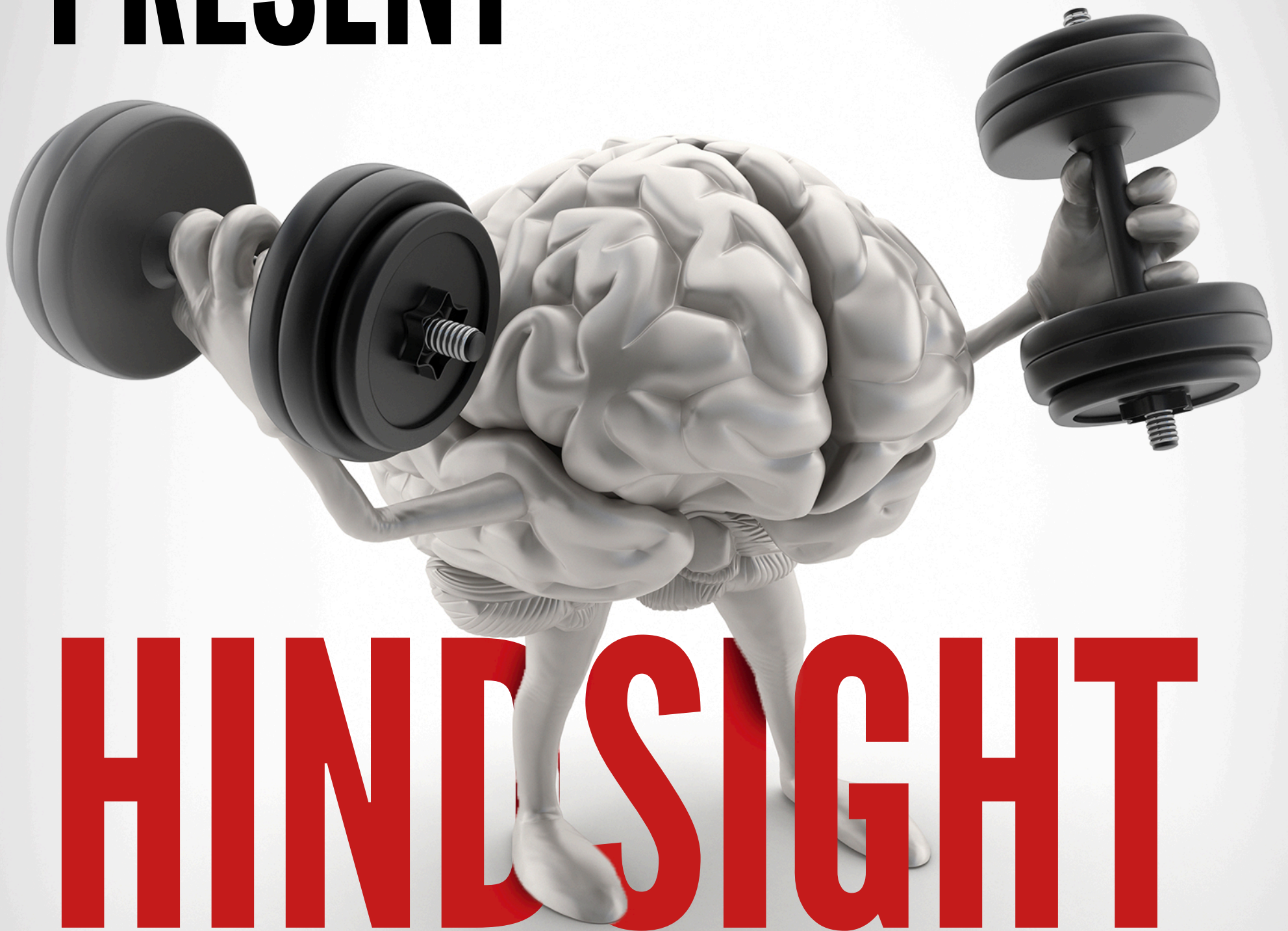


THE PRESENT



HINDSIGHT

Destigmatising Mental Health issues
and informing my generation, the
one ahead and behind us.

G A K U R U G I T H I N J I

THE PRESENT HINDSIGHT

GAKURU GITHINJI

The Present Hindsight
Copyright @ Gakuru Githinji, 2022
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To my parents, brother, my niece, *mbogi*, and all who have made this dream be a reality

THE PRESENT HINDSIGHT

For the previous generation,
The Current generation,
And the one to come.

Let us demystify the brain, and matters related to it when not working the right way, as it also gets sick like any body part.

Let's Talk for Mental Wellness to be normalised...AHUU...!!!

Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	vii
Mental Fitness.....	ix
Brain Surgery.....	x
Introspection.....	xvi
1 CHAPTER ONE	1
1.1 A child's mentality.....	1
1.1.1 what would you say to your younger self?	3
1.2 The Power of Memories	4
1.3 The child who saved you	7
1.3.1 Would your younger self recognize who you have become?	8
1.4 Getting Back	9
1.5 Change of Generations.....	15
1.6 Hindsight Present Battle	20
1.7 The Beauty of Hindsight.....	21
1.8 Hindsight Lessons.....	25
1.9 Self-Care	26
2. CHAPTER TWO	29
2.1 Traumas	29
2.1.1 What are the Ghosts of your Past?	32
2.1.2 What are your fears?	34
2.1.3 How do you make decisions?.....	34
2.2 Toxic Work Environments	35
2.2.1 What is Life-Work Balance?	37
2.3 The Social Media World	38
2.4 Social Media Bullying	39
2.5 Depression	42
2.6 Suicide	45
2.7 Coping Mechanisms.....	47
3. CHAPTER THREE	49
3.1 Life Strategy	49
3.2 Tales to Tell	55
3.3 Empathy	57

3.4 Addiction	59
3.4.1 Why do people indulge?	61
3.5 Hope against Hope	62
3.5.1 What is your Tactic of Disagreement?	63
4. CHAPTER FOUR.....	65
4.1 Self-Mastery	65
4.2 Legacy.....	71
4.2.1 When we talk about leaving a legacy, what do we mean?.....	72
4.2.2 Do choices really have consequences?	74
4.2.3 What is your Validation?.....	77
4.2.4 Do you have a Life Vision?	80
4.2.5 What is your Personal Brand?.....	80
4.2.6 Are you at Peace with Yourself?	81
4.3 Life Choices	85
4.3.1 What is your identity?.....	87
4.3.2 How will our Generation be defined?.....	87
4.3.3 How do you handle despair?	88
4.4 Friendships	90
4.4.1 What is your circle of influence?.....	90
4.4.2 Is contentment the same as satisfaction?	93
4.4.3 What are your Default Settings?.....	94
4.4.4 Who are you and what do you want to be?	98
4.4.5 Whose Message do you Trust?	104
4.4.6 What is your Process?	106
4.4.7 Who do you see?	107
4.4.8 What is Real Power?	109
4.4.9 What is your Fatigue?	110
4.4.10 How are we living?	111
4.5 Dealing with anxiety.....	112
Conclusion	115

INTRODUCTION

This book is written to my younger self, to inform him of what he has learnt about himself. Mental wellness is the key message he has grown to be part of; as he studies himself on a daily attempt to be the best version of himself. From the experiences he has gone through in life, as well as those seen over time is the collection you are about to read. We will address matters of the brain as that is where it all begins. We are in a time where mind related issues have taken over, and it is time to unravel the scary topic of the brain that culturally and socially is spoken in hush tones. We are all affected by life in one form or another, so why not talk about it?

Stress, depression, bullying both physically and online, suicidal thoughts and the actual act need to be addressed, or we will be squirming like we already have been. There are many things to discuss about the brain, what we will do is base this book on personal experiences and interactions on this path of life.

The stigma associated with mental health issues is so saddening, for we are all affected by it and the cases have risen globally as well as locally irrespective of age. This is due to the life pressures increase and technological space created, that has triggered faster access to knowledge, and less emotional intelligence to process all that information seen on a

screen in one's pocket; creating facades of what life is versus what it should be.

We are all unique, our brains as special as our thumb prints, yet we all have a desire to belong. Those who stand out are seen as weird unless they live to specific parameters set forth by cultural tendencies. Rejection of this nature brings forth the darkness that resides within, which if fueled will raise a fire detrimental to the one burning in it; and the surrounding environment will feel the singe of the heat wave. That's all of us based on our environmental adaptation.

Factual discussions always lead to the light, instead of coming from a personal default setting. On your part young man, the systems meant to protect you turned against you, and the animal in you came out for self-preservation. So just sit back my younger self, as I tell you about you, through what we call hindsight.

This is your older self that has gone back in time to merge the two, your dreamy yet broken younger version, to the current one living his life to the fullest, as he does what he was born to do. The learnings have been magical yet so simple, as they are the normal that have turned to abnormal as vices seem to have become the right stuff.

Having a strong emotional quotient {EQ} beats intellectual quotient {IQ} on any given day, even though both are important and serve different roles. IQ will give you the information, required, but EQ will guide you

on how to respond to that information in the best way possible for your wellbeing.

It is from these two functionalities that you will interact with yourself, and when in contact with the circle around you, know your place and own it. That will reverberate to them and strengthen those relationships, for iron sharpens iron.

Mental Fitness

We need to address the root causes of why we are who we are. This should be the justification of expressing our gifts to the best of our ability, which starts by thinking the right way. No one likes to be labelled, and we react to the specific labelling with the same passion as the time we are celebrated for the right reasons. This includes stuff we have learnt along the path of life, that lead to toxicity, that is how someone carries themselves negatively. All these lead to how we engage with people who are within our spheres of influence. There is nothing as fulfilling as vindication of how you dreamt as a child has been acted upon by your older self. You end up looking like who you are, supposed to be, and not what you have been through.

Do not be too harsh on yourself, as you are a sum total of all that has happened to you, but that ought not to be the reflection of who you are. This is because the difference is there is who you were born to be and not

what that has happened to you, although you may reflect aspects of the journey.

They are exactly that, pieces of the story that is still being written, and hope is the fuel that will carry us to the very triumph of our storylines. You may not be who you expected to be, but you still are a work in progress.

Brain Surgery

When the brain short circuits it is just like electricity, the flow of information is not as it used to be, but it still flows. Guess what, that happened to you and you are still recovering from all that; because the brain is the most sensitive part of the body, yet the one that does all the work of carrying, and breaking down information in a human body. You had a vein of the brain burst, had some operations while you were comatose, and here we are now.

In the recovery process you forgot how to walk, talk at a certain period of time, the normal became abnormal. You even forgot who you were, and couldn't stare at your image in the mirror for the person you saw was a stranger. The story gets better for you began to understand the person and memories flowed back in. You reloaded why you love what your love and despise that which you do in equal measure. Mortality becomes your daily vocabulary which you live by to the core, thanksgiving and appreciation for what is as it is and not what you wished to be.

You just play the game of life by the book you learnt as a child and with a remix of who you are now, life is really good I must say. Have you ever done a research on something that has happened to you and the information you found shocks you? Well, studying what happened caused me more confusion than answers I sought. Taking one day at a time as it came thankfully got me in tune with this body that is supposedly mine, but I felt like a stranger for quite some time. What I have come to appreciate is that whatever has happened to you was a means to make you evolve and be that which you were meant to be, no matter how tough it has been.

Understanding it has taken time, as we lack empathy and all we can say is toughen up, we also passed through that and you are not any special, forgetting that the brain operates in a pattern. That it heals in its own pace and wave, so when you think you have overcome a situation it pops up when faced with the triggers that led to it, and takes one back as if time stood still and the pain feels fresh. Knowing how to deal with the triggers in one's life is a super power that cannot be underestimated. Why you do what you do is not just an accident, it is a reflection of beliefs, experiences one has gone through, hence their outlook on what they perceive or observe as the norm to them.

The brain is like a river in that it has tributaries that bring forth information and distributaries that direct the information to the required area. Dots will

be connected to find the image required at a particular time, that it will need to be remembered.

Confusion is not supposed to be in the program in that it leads to wrong decision making, where the emotion takes over and hinders proper interpretation. We judge people's lifestyles because they do not abide by what we are used to, and that we do not understand why they do what they do.

Why not look for reasons of why somebody has done something, rather than the blanket approach of either crucifixion or sycophancy leading to false information as the foundation? The battle of the mind needs a crucial army because the forces against it are armed to the teeth. This is as normalizing unthinkable acts has become the way of doing things.

Our God is intentional and since the first day of creation, He had a plan and executed it to the letter. We are a representative of his ability to plan ahead and have order. All of us in a unique way fit in the jigsaw puzzle of how to belong into this game of life. It does not operate in chaos. It is planned and well timed to happen when it should. That is the belief we should hold, because my God is deliberate. Try as much as possible to choose and apply that which makes you excited.

Mental health is a global issue and one does not just get themselves out of it or snap themselves from it. Like a tree with a lot of branches are the causes of mind related matters. Thus, they cannot just be placed in a box

as madness, especially here in Africa where it was and still is viewed as a curse or demon-oriented occurrence by cultural lenses.

I will not claim to hold all the answers to this topic, what will come out is my view based on having my brain opened and the journey of getting to know how it works to the eventual unravelling of who I am. Why and how it happened are not as important as the way it happened, and the timing in my ride of life. Writing has helped me create the image and better know the nitty gritty, as the more I put on paper, the clearer it becomes.

Just like we engage in physical exercise to be strong, the same should be for mental fitness. Thinking the right things, dealing with triggers, enjoying that which we love and cutting out that which does not goes a long way to being healthy mentally. The degree is what determines intervention, meaning it varies and depends on various factors that are individual in the person's environment, and that they will vary depending on the circumstance. Triggers may be genetic, stress from your environment, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) to name but just a few. All these lead to the thought process being detached from its normal operations.

Everybody has a personal story to tell that is unique, and at the same time there is someone on this earth that is undergoing a similar experience as your own, even if it is not exact. The individual will gain knowledge and aspiration from your story, and be able to navigate through that which

they are facing. Knowledge is power and used where needed it prevents disorder, while making it manageable to solve that which appears to be a mountain to you, but is currently overcome elsewhere.

All stories are valid and shame has no place in them, for they have led you to this point we are in. The past is gone but if understood it will help give light to the present as we prepare for the future. The failure to do so means we will be travelling to the future with the baggage firmly on our backs. We needed to have lessened this load in order to handle at our optimal capacity that which lies ahead of us.

Whatever curve balls life has dealt you, just know that you have the capability to deal with them, even if it appears as if it is not possible to get over that hump. The lenses we use to view other people should be similar to that which we do on our own, and if it appears crooked, then take a look at your own interpretation as there lies the solution. This is because it is written that out of the bowels of the heart the mouth speaks, so that which you spend the most time with comes to be a reality regardless of its benefits or failures.

It sounds weird but if we were to be like the happy child we used to be, with the current knowledge we have now; then we would be gentler with ourselves and the curves that will definitely be thrown along our paths. Knowing that life is tough and sweet at the same time is like that spot that

vision and purpose meet, as it unravels the reason why one does what they do and a limelight to the unseen as if it were, despite the noise of the current situation. That is how the mind operates at a normal level, with clear pathways that enable one to coordinate through them knowing where one is headed.

Vision and strategy help one plan ahead to where they are going, so why not study yourself because you are the vehicle that will steer you to those destinations planned. Comparison is the killer of personal dreams, because you were born uniquely and maybe it is the school system that made us be uniform in our dressing, but should have left room for uniformity of understanding and grasping of knowledge. It is my belief that any form of knowledge is open to questioning as it is in that process that we get further understanding of the subject matter. Academic argumentation used to bring together opposing thought processes, that have to deliver their pros and cons to the audience, and in that event people would learn in a 360-degree angle about the topic and grasp it in its entirety.

The subjects that brought forth imagination used to be compositions and *inshas* where you would be open to paint your own story. The arts and music play the same role, as your essence is what will be responsible for the outcome based on your emotions and message you seek to portray. Let us learn to listen to understand rather than to respond, as we appear to

have forgotten this art, where we learnt as proposers and opposers in debate clubs when we were young and excited about life.

The key instigator of this book was the brain and how it works, as well as why we are who we are as a result of that; and how knowledge of that enables on to aspire for that which we cannot see as if it were. That in other words is faith, hope, strategy, purpose and legacy.

Introspection

This was a word your primary school teacher would love to use, yet you did not grasp its meaning, until you took stock of a time when your life hang on by a thread. When the brain re circuits, personality does not really change; the outlook is the determinant. When we lost that thought process, we lost sense of direction in life.

The sense of direction part has been interesting, for many are the times you knew you were getting lost literally in several places, as the givers of directions who normally are supposed to be aware of the location, had given them from their perspective. That led to me actually getting lost, this is because we all tend to see everything in life from our view points and experiences.

As for the direction in life, in my opinion that is the most important element of the brain, for it is the internal compass. When tampered with, it leads one to an area of darkness, the ground zero of hopelessness. This is where if one emerges from it, they are scarred, or seek to perform at

their ultimate self. The scarring causes a negative outlook towards life, and it looks gray with no hints of sunlight, and the dark side is the impression that one is not worth their breathe. That taking their own life is an answer in itself. This is due to the worthlessness they feel, that they will not be missed by anyone when not in the picture.

The issue of creativity and logic thinking, as well as motor functions are different from one person to the next. You got hurt on the left side of the brain which is said to be the analytical side of it. The right side is supposedly the creative part. Well, immediately you woke up from the coma your speech was slurred, writing a coherent sentence was taxing. Thinking in the present was also nonexistent, but the motor functions were doable, and generally you looked as if you were back to your former self. This turned out not to be the case as time progressed.

First your brain ran on your subconscious, then there was the influence of medication, and thirdly the sense of reality. Let me explain these three. The first time you woke up in the hospital to you was a week later, to your conscious self. Only recently did a friend give you the breakdown of the day-to-day occurrences. You discovered that you have a week that is unaccounted for, yet you were there physically, but not mentally. He told you that you were awake on that week and you talked, but you were agitated by where you were. From a 360-degree angle based on the image given and the one you hold, you existed in three spaces, meaning you were conscious, spoke, saw and felt; yet you had no present existence mentally.

Your brain was asleep due to the heavy medication, hence the lack of registration of anything that happened, even though it looked like you did.

To this day there is absolutely no memory of that week or any occurrence that you have been told of. There was a time you went to the High Dependency Unit (HDU) to visit someone and you had zero recollection of that place. You were told you spent a week there, no recollection popped up. They looked at you strangely, for you are expected to remember because you caused a lot of havoc there, that even led to you being tied down by ropes. That point is where your past met your present and the lack of the sense of reality.

The brain is very impressive in its plasticity. That it is extremely malleable and this is part of what saved you, as the memory bank was never affected. It just needed stimulation through the five senses of sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste. These were necessary to recover all the information that made you since inception, that were relevant in your life at any instance.

The mind stores so much information per second. It is amazing, and when that process started working after its brief holiday, all you could do was sit back and marvel at the amount of information that was given from any trigger to the five senses. This is because they related past information to the present setting, and future observations based on those two. This would lead to *déjà vu* moments, where you foresee that which is not as if it were, for they first played in your mind, which had seen traces of it in

the past, and could predict a certain outcome. This is what professionally is referred to as strategy, planning for the unseen with the seen capabilities, and seeing in advance the outlook and possible end results to get there.

The world finally started making sense, and it took a while to distinguish between the current version of you having gone through this dark process, and the younger self who existed before time stood still, literally. This is because the information your brain possesses up to now remembers this when you woke up. You assumed you were in your bed at home, and that it was the immediate day, a Monday which was a holiday. Then you noticed you were in foreign surroundings, and tied to a bed. Confusion immediately crept in and you grew agitated.

Triggers you had not dealt with from your past took charge and you were back to your past by ten years; as that was the memory that popped up in your brain. Remember this is the false reality as you had been in HDU for a week and had even engaged with others, but in your mind, you are at the general ward with no clue of why you are there. The gravity of the situation never sunk in then, for you existed in those two spaces simultaneously, and additionally, the powerful medication made you exist in both painlessly.

Nothing made sense as you had not been sick before and there was never a hint of what came to pass. The medication story is another phase, as you

were on them for six months, but once you stopped taking them your world would collapse. This is when the reality of life hit your brain, and body hard. The mind was operating without medication and was seeking to regain control without external influences. It did not recognize the impact of the injury before their period of getting finished.

Without medication it was worse, as the brain could not relay the information of the moments, to the rest of the body. You believed you were okay, and tried to get back to the normal interactions you used to before the incident, but this was an attempt at futility. The mind commands were not coming like it expected. The brain was on a fight with its self to recover the present environment. This confusion would lead you to that dark space where there was no sunrise nor sunset, but just pure darkness. You were not aware of time or place and barely existed, as you felt there was no difference between you and a rock; as you both did the same thing, just existing in this world with no sense of purpose. You would look at yourself in the mirror and not identify who you were seeing, as that was a stranger to your brain. It scared you as you could not define who that image was; and would question yourself and the God you served about the occurrences that led to that, for nothing made sense.

There is something like being on autopilot of yourself, where you conduct all the required functions of walking, eating, all done automatically as they need no thought process. This is as they have been perfected over time, and in no need of a brain work, as it had gone on holiday. It had to

do so as it is a very sensitive part of the body, and the amount of work it does is incredible. So, it had to reset itself to recover all that information; but at the same time, you had to live concurrently and thus the confusion taking place.

Your brain never failed you, for it came back with such a force it was as if it was trying to make up for lost time. At the same time, it was trying to prove to you that it was back and you should chill, for it remembered almost everything, on a level that you had glimpses of before the accident. Now it was trying to show off, because you would see something and it would bring every memory that related to that topic in high density imagery that left you in awe, as it brought every minute detail of that moment.

All you could do was smile, as your God had your back always, in the darkness and the light. The subconscious would at times work faster than your recollection, and you would find yourself not remembering a person's name, but have the ability to describe everything about that person based on your interactions with them. Someone would know who you were referring to, just that the name was the missing link, but the entire description solved that part. The connectivity of your life to the present moment is so clear that it teeters on spooky, for everything about your life makes so much sense. All the experiences you ever had, the interactions at each phase of your life, and the outcomes lead to one eureka moment after another.

Looking back at the time you were in the dark, you give thanks that you hung on as this other side is worth it. Therein lies the paradox of life, in that it can be so beautiful and ugly at the same time. Just being there regardless of it all is what it is all about, as no period is permanent. Despite the rocking of the boat of life, the stream will calm and you will go gently down in a path that had before looked like an upstream journey to your destination of choice.

1 CHAPTER ONE

1.1 A c h i l d ' s m e n t a l i t y

The texture of gravel is always amazing to children and they have fun just throwing them around and we get angry at a natural process of just being in the moment of the sense of touch. They are born with the five senses to enable them get through the world of infancy, that also in adulthood should make one navigate through life, yet we forget to use these basics. All children are born bright but as they proceed, we sort of find their blemishes and focus in that rather than their natural brilliance which they were born with, to fit in a box they have no idea about. These are the same young one who have a recollection even when they cannot talk, they know their people by sight.

There is no stupid baby, as all are born a clean slate and a mind like a sponge. Give them a mobile phone and they decipher it faster than an adult, especially the games part. They trust in adults who may not have the best intentions for they are yet to distinguish between such through emotional growth. By sight alone is enough for a child to know their *mbogi*, and never forget how you look like even when they cannot talk. The gift of hearing enables them know their people, and by tasting they decide what they do not like even if it is beneficial to their growth.

Sounds are enough to capture them in animations, and just learn by sight and listening. They regurgitate all they hear; dare you say a bad word and

they will sing it repeatedly. One does not need a tape recorder in the house as they replay it to the tee.

Most of us got cheated out of our youth and carry those scabs instead of having learnt from them, then we get what they call childhood trauma. We then end up passing them from one generation to another, which we replicate the same in adult hood, get triggered every time and find ways to hang on to sanity which dig just deeper into that which we try to forget but we cannot. The child in oneself will not allow to be forgotten before peace is found within about the past to tame the present and embrace the future as it should be done. The pressure on us as adults is a reflection of personal issues, and not necessarily the problem at hand.

Triggers are those things that make you go back in time as if you never left to a dark place in your past. They play themselves over and over, and unless you unlearn that which was and learn that which should be as if it were, then it would be like a bad movie replaying itself. The beauty of the mind is that it so malleable it can adapt to that which you listen to, think about, watch and give time to. Triggers should not determine your current state or worse of all your future. They are what your mind remembers but your hands are what your present develop the future. By using all that you were born with to do all that you can then you are headed in the right direction.

Triggers make us look for crutches to down their noise, that we react instead of acting on life as it is. Some of these crutches include anger, alcoholism, drug partaking of, and generally vices in society that make one not be their normal self. The dopamine in one's brain is that part that gets excited and gives some form of happiness.

These triggers provide the temporary outlet of such and one gets a high, that sadly is not natural and demands more as time passes and one becomes addicted. Happiness can be gotten and generate naturally such a feeling through endeavours that one loves and gets engaged in. exercises gives the same boost, listening to songs takes one to a place that is serene, proper entertainment of movies and the animations children get engorged speak to that part of the brain that wants peace. You remember that kind of happiness that a child portrays of pure innocence and joy? Well you still have it in you, so pursue it at all costs for such is the beauty of life.

1.1.1 what would you say to your younger self?

We spend our young adulthood with internal conflicts of who we desire to be; versus who we were instructed to become. Learning to listen to our kids intentionally is a super ability as opposed to giving them instructions on how to feel, think and speak. This because the strategy of life has no blueprint that is stuck in stone, but adapts to it as eras change, and acting accordingly as per the laid down foundations will withstand whatever storm that will come. These foundations will be deeper than the current circumstances.

You can learn from the negative experiences, and do the opposite as a result, and therein lies the power of change, the only thing that is always a constant and does what it means, change. Learning from observation is faster and less painful than from experience, and this where the mentorship gum boots are worn for it is messy at first, and great at the finish while interesting in the process. The greatest leaders become as having been followers in a certain stage of their lives, hence leading is showing your followers the way, as you know it now, and didn't know it then

1.2 The Power of Memories

You have gone through all the step of growing up, and boy do you have memories. Your mum reminds you that you hated nursery school, and refused to go after the first term. It seems your stubbornness is since time immemorial. You hated learning but loved information as you were always inquisitive asking about everything and just as curious. Naughtiness came with the territory and you either fought or ran with lightning speed that later on would play a big role in your life through the introduction of rugby due to the swiftness you still possess I must say.

Since you are from the generation of *m a B o l o* as ~~We say~~ *aygitân* our local slang, you went to pre-unit as well and have great memories of the foundations to learning you interacted with, so clear you can actually see yourself walking to school with your brother, and waiting for the day of free milk that you would tear a hole and put sugar in. this would then be

put in a friend's refrigerator to form milky icicles that you would lick with pleasure.

In primary school you ran literally and with books as well, for there did you find your peace of mind, which in adulthood has become your solace in the confusion of life that as much as it tried, did not manage to drown you; though it did its best and you almost gave in.

Remembering yourself was a saving grace, for you knew fact from fiction that you have a God who knew you even before you were born. He has never been accidental, but the ultimate strategist putting the end even before the beginning.

You have just talked with your desk mate and memories as usual have flooded your thought process and taken you back in time again. The songs you are listening to as you type this are coincidentally of that time so the mood is so in that period it is nostalgic.

The power of music in regurgitating memories is legendary, for it takes you back to a certain point in time that time stood still and remains imprinted in that song to your soul.

You made it through primary to high school filled with dreams about when you grow up. Let me tell you grew in leaps and bounds, that stretched you to ways you would never have even anticipated, that set up the platform for your years as a legal adult.

You normally fill WhatsApp groups with too many messages of memories. This is because from such interactions that you retrieve memories that have been lying deep in the mind. In your high school group, someone's name or even face can bring it all back and make you either smile or frown, depending on the message it brings. Such memories have made this book a reality as it is all about that; life and experiences both good and bad. An example is you have just seen a name, and the memory file that holds all you know about him sprung forth as he is the reason you started playing and fell in love with rugby.

This is a sport that helped us deal with our anger issues and depression later on. We personally thank him for that and we all have such stories about life and the people who have contributed to who we are as human beings. Your high school best memories are filled with extra-curricular activities of sports specifically athletics and rugby, as well as music and French functions or as we called them 'funkies'.

These were side events from education that you were to partake of, but have helped you survive the most in the concrete jungle of real life, as you learnt how to relate to people, what papers cannot do. This is why you see people with professor titles before them and have no emotional intelligence of dealing with fellow human beings, as the title is them and not the other way. It is said that if you cannot break down an issue to a five-year old's language then you truly have not grasped the concept, so I

hope you have understood so far as we walk through this journey, your journey.

1.3 The child who saved you

You have a very young niece who does not know her mere presence in your life led to coping with the darkness within your brain that transmitted to your heart and entire body was lethargic, barely existing but merely breathing. None of us knew of the other's challenges, we had no voice, but the gift of presence played its role in the healing process as we were just comfortable in each other's presence.

One day we will tell her when she understands what she did at that age of two years by simply being herself, without even knowing it. She just giggled and looked at you as the greatest human being she knew, with her big eyes. He remembered the super hero in him that used to growl and he listened to the silence, and parts of him started falling into place. The broken ones were converted into a magnificent tie and dye work of art, as the scars testified, he had survived the war; but the battle of life still awaited. He was getting equipped for the next phase one step at a time.

The other kid who saved him was his younger self, we are talking about you for your information. You revealed yourself and reminded him of how you grew, what you learnt and who you were made of. He spoke to you about the dreams you had, and reminded you of those you currently bear.

Speaking to you in a way only you could get where he was coming from and where you were headed to. He breathed hope in your dry bones, and made you walk again with that step that had disappeared.

That personal swag of owning your space to your best ability, was slowly restored, with the new version better than the previous one, as all models should be. Having gone through the system of new mindset software and pimped in accordance to the current software, the hardware adapted to the transformation. At times it was stretched as it sought to keep up to the new environment, yet did not flounder at all as the both have to run concurrently for smooth operations from the brain to the body for action.

1.3.1 Would your younger self recognize who you have become?

Human beings were never meant to be put in boxes as their potentials are immense. This the joy that creativity brings, as the imagination is allowed to flow freely, in proper boundaries that ensure the system is exploited fully and structures to implement them.

Every passion involves risks as it is fueled to fulfil that which only the dreamer can see, as dedication not fame is what leads to purpose. You learnt that you do not have to be what they say you are, but by being truthful to yourself would bring out the most awesome individual that you are meant to be.

A real man tries and falls, tries again and falls. He then picks himself up, and even when he cannot and knows he has done his best, he can just lay down there knowing he gave it his best shot. He needs to breathe in, rest

and try to relax. This is something hard to do for he is aware of the task ahead, but in order not to break, it must be done intentionally or else it will be downhill. We really hope we have made you proud as we are still in the game of life and each day brings with it a new slate to bet better at who we are as you envisioned as a child. How to be a man, we were never taught in school, at home or even in church. We are mostly winging it yet life demands that we step up or else we will be doomed to be statistical, as those who just filled in the numbers; yet we were created for greatness, our own kind imitated but never duplicated.

1.4 Getting Back

Being in the business of corporate and life storytelling as a strategist, I have come to listen to my story and embrace it. This is so that I can own it all in understanding that the good, the bad and the ugly have all contributed to being who I am currently.

The ugly part was me getting a brain vein burst and throwing me into an unconscious state. My subconscious was there but the consciousness on recess. It was a messy affair as all memories got jumbled and messages confused.

In a nutshell that is the state one is literally nuts as you exist by name and nothing else, in between this life and the other yet you are unaware of either. Getting back is not only about that point in time, but as of the complete being that is called me. A whole human being with a purpose in

life and dreams to give birth to, this book being one of them. So proud of myself to have made it here, even if it seems that I have not.

The clarity of thought is so clear making it easier to go through the challenges of my time. The daily assurance of the new coming and the old surpassed gives one the oomph to fight out the dreams and nightmares simultaneously. This is because they both exist in the mind, and are driven by forces that featured in the past; but still demand to be seen in the present whereas the future has no space for them.

There are some memories that come about when one looks at past photos that will bring a smile or a tear to you. All these depending on what emotion they bring about that the brain had exactly stored that time into immortality. Other photos you will look and wonder what had taken place. An example being when you were young, you have no recollection of the kind of baby that you were, yet you existed and your parents remember almost every day that you lived as you were under their care. This shows that memories are made on a daily basis. They get stored depending on how they made you feel, or the importance of that memory to connect to the next point in time.

If it was just an occurrence then that is what it will be. This is because as the brain is always on call, it has perfected how to cope with the daily information it processes, and only links that which it perceives as relevant as per the individual necessity. Some information may remain suppressed

until triggered by something that caused it, while another may remain dormant as it has no network to take a lead to the next memory.

Someone commented that it was awesome to lose some parts of your memory that were bad as they would not haunt you. Well nothing exists in a vacuum hence the connectivity of images, and if that photo is removed then you will have a gap as to your present and it will cause more turmoil to you than forgetting about it would. The beauty of the past is exactly that.

It is a memory and should have no power over you at the present, unless you let it do so, for you have evolved over time and that past does not define you; being only as good as the next step you take in this journey of life.

Pondering over should, would and could does nothing but give one a heavy heart. The current cards at one's deck are those that matter, shuffle them and put your bet on them. That is what life requires, for who you are to place what you have in the game of life and hope that it will turn out to your favour. Life is not a roulette; it is planned and we are implementers in our individual capacities.

There are days I would wake up and my mind was blank. I would look around and question my existence, no one had an answer to this. The subconscious was in full operation trying to make sense of things that used to be automatic, like recognition of people and even walking. There is a

feeling of the ground being nearer or further than when you get new spectacles and this was how your brain was seeing. There is a day someone came to greet me and yes, the face was a familiar but the image of where I knew it was blank. Many are the times this would happen and I could feel the librarian in my brain literally looking for images that connected the current occurrence to the stored one; and sometimes it would come up null and void. These experiences reminded me of the power of connections because the mind will only store that which one involves in themselves, and remember clearer and better even years after it happened.

Lessons learnt included to appreciate a simple thing like walking, which we normally do without even putting a thought into it. You get curious looking at your nephew learning to walk and the excitement everyone has with every step, as there will come a time that will be natural. At that point in time it is a great accomplishment. My niece on the hand is learning new things in the first year of class, and the excitement is the same as we draw her hand over and over as she sings songs they learnt in school. I tried to recall myself at those ages and the memories were not there, but pictures are proof that I passed through these steps. It made me realize there are so many steps that I may not remember that my God does as we have been together even before I knew myself. My family took the responsibility until a certain age when I would handle the basics of life, where we thought I had grown up and knowledgeable in this life. Then the

realization that there was more to life than what was visible would be provided by experiences.

So those days I have mentioned that the mind would turn up blank the reality of it was that my lack of awareness at that point did not mean that I did not exist just like being a child I never knew I was one; but the things that matter in this life like spirituality, family, friends knew who I was even if at that moment the person in that body had no clue.

It is this that my journey of life I questioned the existence of myself, and realized that to reach at this point I had to align the dots of my life that made me reach at this point.

It is a bitter sweet point as the reality dawns on me whenever I hear of a suicide attempt that I was at that point too, and not any special from someone who had done it. There is always hope even where there seems to be none and confusion is the reality. We are at that turning point as a society where these stories have become the norm irrespective of status, gender, or even age. What we need to train on as individuals and then as a society is the power of self-awareness, emotional intelligence, empathy, purpose and destiny. In a nutshell a personal investment in oneself will help one deal better with themselves, and generally others within their environment.

Too many of us are walking around scarred, and it is obvious in how we treat ourselves first, and then others in general. Let us take a walk as

through this journey of our lives as we study the blueprint of hindsight, the ability to look back and appreciate that were it not for our God we would have perished. I firmly believe that all lives matter as we are all unique under our Maker. I have discovered that it is impossible for me to tell my story even if I wanted were it not for Him, as I would be cheating myself and denying the fact, that alone I would have perished.

Life is like a puzzle game and each point has its place in the entirety so one is not what they do on a day-to-day basis, but rather the sum total of all that have led them to be human being that they are at that moment in time. Health is something that cannot be negotiated. When you are in a hospital bed your definition by society ceases to exist and it is you and whoever you claim to worship that comes into play.

From the many paths of life, I have been lucky to walk on, the people I have learnt the most from are not CEOs but those you pass by without a thought. The watchman, driver, barber, lady of the night, and a trimmer of the hedge have provided so much insight into life and what its essence is, that re-shaped my opinions about what I thought was supposed to be.

From those who we look up to in society I have learnt what not to do, as some had let what they were take over who they thought they were. This thought process made them put heavy mental weights on people they were supposed to build as per the position they held in society. With great power comes great responsibility is such a heavy statement that we mostly

do not realize. The power behind the seat makes most of us drunk with power. This same feeling dissipates as any other feeling and leaves one hollow. Going back in time such nasty experiences were part and parcel of your journey of life although at that time they were bitter pills to swallow. Therein lies the beauty of the power of hindsight.

1.5 Change of Generations

Looking at yourself and not knowing who you are, and the reason for your existence and you are at the zombie mode where you are physically there but mentally the mind is in absentia, not on vacation like it would wish but in a sea of turmoil without a destination. I had a conversation with my friends about how we had gotten bullied in high school and we sort of had similar experiences but different perceptions of the outcome. What we had in common was we were bitter at the oppressors who included both students who were seniors and teachers as well.

Some of us said that bullying hardened us and that millennials need it as they seem to be soft as a result of pampering. We all carried some sort of scar from our experiences yet still wanted similar fate to ours befall our children by taking them to boarding school, okay corporal punishment, yet the result we desire from them can be achieved in a manner that does not inflict trauma on them as well. That talk was good for we saw ourselves in the other person regardless of the schools we had attended, but the culture was similar.

As for the millennial angle, well that is a new topic that requires new solutions as they seem to live in a fast pace society as a result of the technological milestones being made in their generation hence seem to possess so much information, yet do not have the grasp of what to do with it. They are adults on paper and still babies on the ground.

They have more intelligence for that age but little emotional quotient capable of dealing with the results of their actions. We can teach them what they do not have, while explaining that which they claim to have, by meeting them at their level and raising them to ours.

The current generation is ‘woke’ as the experiences being expressed are based by those who have been pressed for so long, that what they see are still in existence generations later and still affecting them, as it systemic rather than one faced once. With more access to online material they have a tremendous amount of information to process compared to some of us who grew up where having a landline telephone was a sign of prestige.

Brains are extremely individualized as they are different from one person to another, sensitive as in when a mark is left in them, they note it and act based on the person’s environment, brilliant if you think all the processes done every second. Every generation is faced with its own demands and how they handle them as per the situation then on the ground is what leads to progress or demise; even though the common joke is that on the ground things are different. Thinking of it, it is very true.

We cannot raise our kids how we were raised for even those who raised us were not raised right. We are well raised, with value systems, but the processes that led to those values and our outlook towards life though common were not right. They looked normal but that does not justify them, just like the topic of bullying we have just addressed.

Their intentions may have looked to be helpful, but they left scars which they themselves had and not yet addressed, hence the normalization of abnormal rituals. Pain by any name is still pain and leaves a mark in the brain that may be detrimental to life. We were all punished at some point in time, yet it yielded different results. Some of us did not change, others changed, and others got hardened and it became a routine. Some got scared, others got boldened and others just existed as it became a culture. A kid's mind is developing with growth and hence relies on the five senses we are born with. There is the point where crying communicates all the information required, and the parent understands it. Then there is the observation process where all they hear, see, feel, gets replicated to test it even if they do not know the reason.

This is a stage where they hear and repeat conversation you did not think they were listening to, and shock on you when you have guests, they spill it out. They are receiving information but not yet able to process it. As we grow, we try to make sense of the new environments we are thrown either in school, work or basic life that is not our norm.

There was a point in the recovery process when the best we could do was observe, as the brain had gone back to factory settings. It needed to process the situation, the individual, then the memories it held based on the environment they came in.

Then it would package them as they were supposed to be based on the current circumstance of confusion. There were images that were blurred, others that were as clear as a whistle. The five senses did what they were supposed to when someone is a child, to provide data based on what is seen, touched, heard, felt, smelt and tasted. From this data is where the brain does its processing ability. This is to explain the reason why that particular sense is felt, and the meaning to that person then store the implication of it.

I have tried reaching out to those who could show me the version of me that they held, so that I would get to know and understand it and myself at that time. We have been met with exciting descriptions like rigid, and controversial. We have lost many friends and gained many more as the process has been tedious and not everyone understands your journey, which is life and as they say *que sera sera*. We view life based on the experiences we have ever held, and find the justification based on that, which are our perceptions of all that we come across.

Emotions get the upper hand as that muscle is more powerful than the logic one, hence many wars are won by enhancing emotions than the

cause of the war. We would rather rely on systems than explain ourselves, as leaders or followers. All voices count but shut up about their own lives, yet every five years every individual vote really does count. Some of these patterns need to be broken and they have by “Rona” as normal is no longer normal.

Real leadership has been observed as opposed to the noise makers we have been used to see as the present and future hope yet they are barely that, just empty promises and no action. Like we said things on the ground are very different.

Mathematics multiplication table and their patterns were worked on daily in lower primary school and the brain remembers stuff based on repetition. That is a flip from lack of self-remembrance to gathering almost all the information learnt by going through repeatedly.

They came back so clear it is creepy, as you have been able to remember aspects of your own past that just make you grin and you are like wow that is amazing.

People in life are the value you place in your life and as they do in theirs. There has to be balance for the relations to walk in tandem as they should do, hence it has taken time to regurgitate people and their placement in your life. What is interesting is faces have never disappeared even if names may have. You see someone on the street and you are like I know

this person. If you see a glimmer of resemblance from them then you say hello. This is Nairobi after all, we snob one another as if we are strangers.

The value of space is important that we should know ours and teach our kids to value their spaces as we have seen the madness that exists in our society regardless of how we raise our own, the environment is not as gentle.

When you know your space, you can avoid a lot of conflict both personal and professional, as we all are going through stuff in our lives and we need to breathe from time to time.

1.6 Hindsight Present Battle

Can you confront your past and still appreciate it by living in the moment; despite the scars it caused, and the lessons learnt? Do not raise the next generation according to the hardships template you were raised in. There is this belief that kids are having it easier than we used to and so we question why they should kill themselves yet we emerged tougher. The reality is that we are scathed and think it is normal. It is not right to live in unhuman mental environments, yet we see it all over in toxic work environments; from both the giver and recipients of that environment.

Some paths in life are purely accidental, while others are choices we make, after getting used to that which the majority believes in even if it is not right. That is what we talk about when we mention hindsight, as it is

going back, way back, back into the time we barely knew anything, but we trusted in the process to guide us to the light. The present self has lost hope and chosen to live instead of thrive. The present scenarios may not be to our desire, but we will by God's grace do our best with what we have, to get where we are supposed to be. Hold on youngster, this ride is very interesting. The lessons we have learnt have made the journey worth engaging in.

1.7 The Beauty of Hindsight

Seating down and writing these thoughts takes our guy back to the days when he used to write composition and *insha*, the creativity involved in playing with words, to come out with an image of a story that only existed in his mind. Little did he know that these small activities he indulged in when young would all add up to this moment that you are reading his words, only that the words involve the journey of his life and his view of his surroundings all came to add up to now. That is where the title comes from, that is the ability to look back and see how the dots in life connect to the period one is currently in, and the full picture is beautiful because everyone has a story to tell. Everyone was born unique, there is no reject but awesomeness in this thing we call life. So, buckle your seat and let us travel through life from the prime position of inside the brain, as you also connect your milestones to now and how they have made you who you are now.

This topic came about when this young man was seeking himself after he had lost his health, to a brain injury. He came to understand how his brain worked through collection of the images in his mind which were scattered all over, as the brain itself was in shock. Thus, the process of restoring it had to take its journey at its own time. The funniest thing was that the more it came to redeem itself, the more it understood to a deeper degree its surroundings.

On the outside he looked like he had recovered, but internally it was not as simple. Hence the lessons learnt are part of what we are going to walk through as he had. A discovery was that the brain never forgets events, but they have to be connected directly to the person present in that point in time. The saying that an elephant never forgets does not even come close to the human mind and its operations, because there are the conscious and subconscious parts of it which when working together bring about the whole image.

The conscious part lets you do things without even noticing that you are doing them, like breathing, walking, and talking. The subconscious stores all the events that have taken place.

Through the five senses, it can give you an exact remembrance of a certain point in time, how you felt about it; what it looked like, the smell, as well as how you experienced it.

We will go deeper into how this operates as we progress in the book. So, the young man was healthy in one moment and the next one the only thing he could do was breathe, and for seven hours that was the status before anyone knew what was transpiring inside him, as he had no external injury. To him when he woke up a week later, he thought he had just woken up after a short nap, and the conscious and subconscious that we have talked about failed to make sense of the moment for he had been unconscious.

He had gone through what to him was a short period of time, yet the reality on the ground was that time had flown at a fast rate that would take him long to realize what had actually happened. Those who love comic books understand that definition of quantum theory of moving from one time zone to another; either to the future or past, and still return to the present. The power of hindsight does that, as you can see the whole image of how one point in time defined the next, and how they all come together and make more sense; than when you were going through a single event. Life is a journey, and all experiences play their part to one another. Be they happy or sad, they are part of the journey and do not define the person unless one chooses them to do so. Basically, we are learning on how to deal with our hardware which is our body, and we can only make it work better by understanding the software which is the brain, and it conducts everything seamlessly until when affected, which will mess you up.

As a young man, you grew up thinking that life is black and white, yet

you will meet the gray areas and they will seek to consume you. That foundation of the Truth and the Maker of it will be your anchor even when you have lost it all. It will be the lighthouse in the storms that will seek to drown you and all that you stand for, but you God will be by your side throughout. You will perceive it as silence, but He will be taking you through it. When you emerge, you will still find where you had left Him, and He will not hold anything against you.

The one you were taught as a kid is The One you will recognize amidst the noise that surrounds the topic, and you will be in safe hands for He changes not. He knew you before you were born, and is in charge of your journey. You are just the carrier of the purpose that has been set before you and equipped you for.

At times you will question His confidence in you. This is as you will be on your knees having done all that you can, and on the verge of despair; He will come through for you as He has always done in the past. In the midst of it all, be at peace, something that will be like grasping at the wind. This is as it will disappear and appear, but you will get how to make it consistent. That peace will surpass all understanding for the created does not determine what the Creator has set forth. This is because He knew when He was making you the shock absorbers that will work for the specific model that is you, like no other. An original, a unique

masterpiece, a classic that has not and never will be seen again, that is you. Always remember that, for there will be times you will need that re affirmation, even if you are aware of it. For the mind is a strange place where the voices heard need to be sorted out carefully.

You are not late neither early, you are exactly where you are needed to be. He is never late, but is the time keeper to the second. So, rest easy with that in mind, that He got this. There are some worship songs that will speak to you directly and you will hear him in them.

Be grateful for those He blessed with that gift to relay the message that you really needed to hear, as it was meant for you. Your energy source comes from him, as he holds it all. The message will pierce you to the marrow, and you will know you are not alone; somebody understands, and there is always hope.

1.8 Hindsight Lessons

We normally speak about if we were to go back in time, what lessons we would tell our younger selves. I would tell that focused, hardworking young man that things may not work out as he had anticipated despite the effort he put in, but to keep doing the right thing. For as long as he believed in them, despite the visible outcome not confirming the invisible of the sweat, prayers and sacrifices put in; the next thing would be that as dreamt and worked for. He will be advised not to get internally reactive to the externally active as that would lead to personal destruction.

He would be taught that life is not as fair as he had believed, and that is part of growing up. To learn that it is not as linear as it appeared to be, but despite the bumps and breakdowns along the way; the true north of the journey would remain as the constant denominator. This means that those foundations that he was still in the process of building would be confirmed in the path, and that the pillars set up when he was not even aware of what he was doing would save his life.

The third would be not to be too hard on himself as a result of the weariness of the journey, but to take a break and exhale while enjoying the scenario of the journey. This is despite the position he sees on the sides and rear-view mirrors, that the windscreen is the most important as it shows where he is headed rather than where he has come from.

The final reminder would be that the best things in life are within and around him. Things like spirituality, health, family, passion, purpose and true friends are worth more than silver or gold. This is because you cannot lose those and remain the same; whereas the material apparatus will be recovered if you have those intangibles, but not the other way around.

1.9 Self-Care

This is knowing and taking care of oneself internally to make the external confirmations a non-issue, as external conditions will not dictate the core of a person as a human being. There are those who love spoilers, those

who spoil and those who loathe the two. I have discovered I am of the first, in that I would love to know in advance why something ended the way it did, then look at the process that led to it. Strategy funny enough abides by that, in that you need to know the end result then work backwards from that point in order to achieve it. It is sad that we mostly travel through our lives in default settings, in that what we think we know is gospel truth unless our foundations get shaken through an abnormal incident that makes us view the same life in different lenses either through experience or new knowledge. Many of us have died on the inside and are just awaiting the physical confirmation. This thought is terrifying as it shows the point of just existing.

Looking at life through our own lenses is never the whole picture. It is unfair that just because you cannot relate to how a person is does not negate their story. We forget to feed our souls with things that will speak life to it, and there are too many negative stories around. If you focus too much on them rather than their solutions you end feeling like there is no hope; that all is doom around you.

Thinking and working for the best in your life and surroundings is not idealistic thinking, but the only way you can deal with what faces you with the resources at your disposal. The feeling one gets after having done their best with what they are is such a high that makes life have all rainbow colours glowing.

There is something about music and its beats that brings about recollections, I was watching a series and some beats came up in the introduction, and a smile just crept in as its images reminded me about a period in time. That is the reason I love songs, and movies for they are recorders of special events and memories. I watched *Sarafina* recently and it took me back to a time when we used to visit a family friend for the sole purpose of finishing that specific movie, so since we visited like once in three months it took a year to finish the movie.

2. CHAPTER TWO

2.1 Traumas

The ability to exist without knowing that you do so is one of the scariest positions a person can be in, as the brain becomes blank and with no vision darkness takes over. When you woke up from the brain operation something had changed and everything remained the same as well. I know it sounds confusing so let me break it down for you. The foundations of you as a human being had been shaken but remained intact, though they had to be regurgitated for the connections to fall into place as it was dark in there. This was your brain trauma. The information threads got functioning at a very slow pace, but all memory is stored in a certain way. Your memory is saved in the format of pictures for you would see something and it brings forth all that image stood for. One thing that is necessary is patience, as you would get agitated when you see something you used to know but it now takes time to package it. Giving yourself space to grow up again is what few ever do, for you are a child in a grown up's body literally for the brain has a clean slate yet many memories to repackage in their right places. The process is still in session and it is amazing that the brain can heal and be better than its former self.

Forgiveness of oneself that things you had done or stood for in the past is giving a second chance to grow from the lesson learnt. This is based on your reconnaissance that what was done was, and actions taken to correct.

If you still stand for what hurt you in the past then we believe that you have not changed. This is because with hindsight comes a complete image of what happened, how and why it was interpreted as it had but now, we know more and are better placed to break it down. Triggers serve to remind one of the ordeals but should not be a reason for going back to that space that caused it in the first place.

The past, present and future hold your complete interpretation of yourself, but neither on their own describe your continuing story. Some things keep on replaying themselves in the brain leading to a default setting about situations, because the norm takes over even if it might not be the truth.

This is how one gets hooked and becomes reliant on external measures to be themselves, brain crutches. They can be from low self-esteem hence seeking approval from others, to pushing heavy drugs to feel normal as without them one is not, which is a feeling and not a fact.

In the past for families before they connected, a due process was followed. If they were known to jog at night in the pitch dark without clothes then that was a red flag, as the coming generation would follow suit and they are not athletes when there is light or clothed for that matter. Generational curses are true for one perceives what they learn at home as what should be even if they are not. Hereby comes the need to learn and re learn that which is and question all that lies inside and outside oneself so as to have the gist of what is as if it is.

Sometimes you have got to step back and take stock of your life, your mental health in particular; as when too much is rushing towards you making informed decisions is not a prerogative, and ends up dictating future occurrences. This is as it is stuck in the brain, like a song that has refused to mute in the background. That is where finding the root cause of action so important, as dealing with the symptoms only goes to fuel the inferno.

The memories application on Facebook has given me a timeline of memories and connection to myself at those periods in time, and what I valued in the friendships that I connected with online. A lot has changed over time on the real-life timeline. That which has remained constant is friendships that even timelines cannot explain, but looking at myself in those words or images brings a connection to my life pattern, and the hope it provides for the future, despite what the reality may choose to dictate in life. Some of us choose to rub off the timeline as it brings memories we would rather have buried, so its impact varies. We tried to do the same when we were in deep depression, and could not recognize ourselves in those happy moments, for all we so were ourselves as failures. From the eyes of someone whose memory was interfered with, it is a God-sent technology to connect his dots in his life.

2.1.1 What are the Ghosts of your Past?

We all have pasts, and getting over them is the hurdle that each of us has to take. Our journeys like we keep on insisting, are personal and can only be engaged to the cause of that trauma, and deal with it. This is because the brain stores everything that you have gone through and that emotion it caused you. It will come out in one way or another. Unless it is communicated, coaxed out and not confronted, as we retreat to our shells when faced with confrontation. We put our guards up immediately we have a sniff of that. The space can only be trustable for even the first step of healing to take place. The pain we carry is corrosive and will spill over to all that we partake in, so the issue of compartmentalization when it comes to this topic is a mirage. It will peep its ugly head when least expected, until it is sat down, and understood.

There are some paths in this life that you will find yourself, yet you had not signed up for them. They will confuse you as they were never part of your plans, but have to deal with them as they come. That mental muscle is sadly gotten for some of us over experience, which is a painful process.

Proper communication of dealing with issues before the metamorphosize to mountains is always the best, as it is simple and efficient at the stage it begins at. Life will keep piling negative burdens, which fuel negative energies and lashing out in what are the symptoms but treated as causes. This like drug abuse, rage and generally operating at a state that you are not known to be.

It is easier to deal with issues one on one, as even writing like I am currently doing, is just scratching the surface of the impact. Genuine conversations with all five senses present on the topic and people going through it help demystify the burden as it is no longer a one-person mirage.

How we talk to our children will reflect when they are adults, as we are building the foundations for them. For even if we cannot see the future of the mountains they will climb, we can train them to trust themselves, as that is the beginning of self-awareness.

To speak when they need to express themselves in the best way possible is self-protection and awareness at the same time, for they will say when things are right or wrong; to get the response required by those in a position to do so for them.

When you are stripped of everything that you use to define yourself, the bones left are the structure, and from that your core self begins the process of rebuilding. It is all in the server of your brain, placing each brick where it is supposed to. Getting rid of unnecessary material that had bugged you for so long, you will discover all aspects of you that had been silent for so long.

The external conditions were too loud for you to hear that still, silent voice that was you, that had been conditioned to shut up. The only person you can ever change is yourself. look in the mirror and be authentic at what

you see. If you do not like it, you can work on it.

If you do like what you see, you can always improve the image to be better. This is as the inner self reflects the outer self, regardless of the many masks we wear to cope in these cruel times; yet awesome when being lived appropriately to the eyes of the beholder.

2.1.2 What are your fears?

Identifying them will help you get why they are there in the first place. Managing them will be led by information that will sort it out in the right manner. An example is public speaking, self-confidence and public spaces one on one engagements, where we stutter and perspire. There is also fear of success, as well as fear of failure.

2.1.3 How do you make decisions?

The process one follows are based on their own self-interest and identifying them will help one know why they do the things they do and in a certain manner that is unique to them; but quite relatable by others who recognize their own tendencies from the descriptions. Some are made out of anger, happiness, disgust.

It seems they emerge from emotions felt, and even the logic is wrestled out of the equation, hence the balance between the brain and heart is always in a see saw relationship.

When you know what you want, the time taken to decide is simplified, and anxiety minimized if not removed completely. Time management will

improve as that which used to waste it is manageable, and the decision is shorter, as well as action upon them improved.

2.2 Toxic Work Environments

Mental health takes a peek in this topic and many are the conversations that have been online of toxic work environments having become as the norm, instead of being seen as blatant bad manners. This conversation coupled with that of interns being misused adds so much to the already existing challenging environment. It does not take a brain surgeon to see this as the precepts of the societal issues that collude to make zombies at home, as they are at work, and it all boils down how do we treat ourselves and how it trickles down the chain, to affect others within our environment. It is upon us to love our neighbours, which means those that are close to you are human beings and not machines without emotions.

So, as we seek to make the bottom-line dance positively, may the people participating in it breathe and be honored, because something like appreciation goes a long way.

Even if it is not monetary based, it goes a long way to acknowledge that they exist and you appreciate their work. A lot more can be done about this topic as we are all going through stuff in our lives, and a little empathy goes a long way to create that space of solving issues, which do not need to spread any further than required. We are a hardworking nation, but look so tired currently as we are going through the motions as emotions have

been stripped of the work and joy becomes a rare specialty. Let us work, love and laugh like we are known to.

We still have within us that ability to laugh at dark situations, as our meme game is at another level; showing we are amusing people who can take it and dish it as well. All we need to do is be careful about it, as decency is golden.

The ego is an Achille's heel in any interaction with a fellow human being that will always cripple the character. There is a type of arrogance that is positive, an explanation is necessary to avoid misinterpretation, is the ability to know oneself enough to not give up even if you know what you are facing appears unbeatable. The key being you are aware you have prepared for that challenge to the best of your strength, so you are more than able to conquer it.

The stories of redemption are always the most awesome, because they demonstrate the human will to come out of a pit even if it all looked as if it was over. The sports stories are closest to my heart from individual games like golf to team sports like rugby. The world is hurting and it needs love and hope as we are all broken each in their own way. We are all of value and it is not determined by any measure.

What we post online is basically a reflection of who we are. As we engage in this world of interconnectivity it is hard to not want to go with the current flow on social media. You find a trend and feel you need to make

your voice heard in all ways. Mob justice has no soul but reacts to the symptoms of the issue rather than uproot the problem.

Everyone wants to fit in rather than stand out, yet those who embrace their uniqueness thrive the most in this new environment. Knowledge of self helps one know where to fit in this puzzle of life without losing themselves in all the outlets that requires their attention from others who seem to be making it in life, yet we all know people rarely post their negative photos and experiences, so all you read is not a reality. Safe spaces are important to identify, and friends will take notice, whereas acquaintances will only observe.

2.2.1 What is Life-Work Balance?

Life is supposed to be simple, but the ebb and flow of challenges make it complex so that when the state of mind is overwhelmed, a shutdown has to happen as it is not intended to operate in such a manner. That is why the operating under pressure does not make it sense, because why should you be operating at a level that hampers either your health either mentally, physically or even both.

Why not make the environment conducive to ensure optimal input and desired results? Pressure is not healthy otherwise our troops would not be returning with PTSD, which if not well addressed leads to inability to function according to the normal environment that is unlike what their mindset had been trained to work under, which is a unique environment.

Treating the office as such is questionable, and if that is the office culture then provisions of how to balance it should be in place. The toxic work environments have been addressed as the conditions they place employees at, and expected results do not tally. This leads to personal breakdowns, absenteeism, lethargy and lack of professional growth; hence new lands are sought, so that system is not economical; but extremely myopic and expensive at the end of it all. Habitual tendencies pass as normal and are done without even thinking about them as they come from the subconscious.

Things like breathing, walking, daily activities are done without putting emphasis on them, yet when lost is when their importance is recognized, the normal becoming the abnormal. The positions we find ourselves in life in terms of family structure, placement in life and environmental causes should not be the definition of the individual. What should define one is the values they hold in life to their personal self, as it will spill over to those around them and those they will come into contact with in their life interactions. Balance in life is everything.

2.3 The Social Media World

Watching the technology outlook of the 80s puts the life journey into focus of how material property gets passed by time. It was a generation where the VCR, and VHS tapes were the in things. Include the *Walkman* and huge mobile phones as the next big things, and all they could wonder

was where such technology was headed. It was like going through a time warp. Here we are with the technology on steroids; where faster and better products and services are popping up. The human brain is the one coming up with these facilities, and the consumer has to bear with all the bombardment. So, the pressure in society has definitely risen again for the latest gizmo in the market, as there will always be a new thing. There is nothing new under the sun apart from change itself.

2.4 Social Media Bullying

In these times of technology, you have met your class one and childhood friends and it seems as if time stood still when you interact, just that you have a beard now? What we call *mchongoano* is the order of the day as this is how you grew up, but not that which is currently on media platforms. They call it trolling and it is evil as people hide behind keyboards and express their horrible opinions yet it reflects their sorry lives. That space for someone with little or no emotional intelligence will be eaten by mases which are yet to know themselves but delight in the downfall of people and negative news.

It is a sad state of affairs yet a source of so much joy if you know what you are looking for in those platforms. There is something called ‘memes’ which bring so much joy to us despite any negative energy that may be directed our way. It makes us laugh as this life is too stressful to remain angry towards it, and there is always a funny side to it. So just like the

words of a great philosopher called Skipper all we can do is smile and wave boys.

Interpretation of banter and the context and venue they are applied in is very important, as there is a very thin line between being inconsiderate and having fun, jokes and cruelty. In this era, we are fluttering at that line so much it is exhausting, as it leads to fights that were never meant to happen. Contribution in a trending topic just because you can with no content about it, or gaslighting behind the keyboards has become fashionable. It reveals more about the person writing it than the one they are intending to shame, or diss as we put it. Letting people be themselves is hard, if you cannot let yourself be in the first place, for there will always be a problem with someone else that you do not see in your own self. It is said remove the log in your eye before the twig you see in another's.

Have you ever visited a car graveyard? The same vehicles you see there from previous generations are the very same when you go to classic cars' competitions having been refurbished are even more valuable than during the times they were new. In the same graveyard are new cars involved in road accidents which ruled the streets but have been reduced to junk. Therein lies the lesson that value changes with time and position, hence no need for arrogance.

Energy changes from one form to another, and the brain is like that. When it receives new information, it readjusts what it knew too what it currently

does. We are more alike than different and this comes out especially in celebrations and mourning national incidents. We thrive in our cultures yet required to be unique in our own space. Balancing these is what life is about. There is a thin line between self-awareness and narcissism because awareness of one's self helps reach out and touch more lives through the gift they have been blessed with; whereas the latter is for the world to revolve around you and creativity is zero.

Constant things in life are taxes and death, more crucial life lessons are hope, self-belief and humanity. Hope in that you have that inner drive that tomorrow is going to get better despite what the current conditions dictate; or that the dreams that you hold are not imaginary but are a reflection of your sweat and vision. That you are just awaiting confirmation of the unseen having put in the seen substance.

Time is not yours to dictate, in that you can plan, which is crucial in achieving any goal, but the time it takes are never in our control. Hope is that what we toil for will come to pass.

Self-belief steers this thought process in the right direction that you are aware of that path that you are investing in is meant for you, even if there is always that fear of the unknown. You trudge on because the failure is in not trying, you may not make it to the intended outcome but you did what you could with what you had. The peace of mind in that situation is

priceless, your best is all that life can demand of you, beyond which is a futile attempt; and below it a feeling of not giving your all about it.

You can never lie to yourself even if you try it as you know your capabilities. Humanity is the ability to know that it is human not to be perfect. How you treat yourself and others will show your strength in living with the affirmation that you care.

Humans can break when pushed to the elastic limit, which all of us do at one point, and that is normal, that we fall but how we get up is the big deal of the human story, and we all love a comeback story as it shows the ability to withstand the impossible.

2.5 Depression

A lethargic feeling where one feels always tired, yet no sleep comes through, exhausted and nothing to calm that sensation. Food becomes history as no appetite is detected or it becomes excessively eaten. It varies from one person to another, for one party either under indulges and the other over does it.

Emphasis being there is no balance as it is either extreme, making it dangerous. This is because life live on balance, and so do the chemicals in the brain like serotonin which if not in the right dosage bring about a discrepancy in the body.

There are different type of depression. Postpartum is an example, which occurs after giving birth as the body tries to get back its settings. The child was a foreigner in the body and it needs to get itself together. Everything will get back to normal with understanding the condition needs to be the most important factor, by the lady going through it and her support system as well. We also have a higher frequency of the male species going through depression but our egos and culture do not allow us to speak. So, we face it like men who never talk about emotions; whereas talking about it is a step in the right direction.

We are living in an era where children are also going through it, a terrifying situation which needs gloves when handling them as they are still young and their brains and emotions under growth. self-bullying is where one does self-harm like cutting their thighs and arms, places where it is not easily visible, as a way of dealing with their internal pain.

One ends up with self-blame, which if not checked may lead to suicide. Body shaming has become an occurrence and is it banter or bullying, especially in cyber sphere?

There are people in our society we call mad because they act in a manner that is different for our normal. They look shabby and utter useless words, and just look scary. Due to conditioning we disregard or even hide them from life as it due to shame. They are just sick, with the ability to get back to the normal they were born to be. The imbalances in the brain we have

talked about is just that, as with proper medication, they can be well.

There is a lady in a stage I see regularly and she fits the description to the letter. She borrows money from those in matatus and who pass her by. She however gets into a matatu every morning and goes back home in the evening; this shows that her functionalities are very okay with just a misguided bit. This sort of depression is at a deep level, and diagnosis related to the causes of each individual is necessary to correct the issue at hand for the person in that state of mind.

Like a vehicle gets aligned when faulty, so do our mindsets when the right analysis and solution meet in the same room. Another old day I saw at the supermarket and her English was impeccable. The insults however that generated from her showed the turmoil in her, for she was talking to herself about not getting into the shop without a mask.

This new change of entry into the place made her angry, she could not connect the dots of the current scenario, yet you could tell she is extremely intelligent.

Let us not look down as family, clan and society on our members who have gone down a separate path that we do not understand. Let us seek to know as they do not know their current status mentally. In a nutshell let us not judge anyone about what they are undergoing. The fact that you managed to get over your challenge while the other did not manage to deal with their own and ended their lives

2.6 Suicide

This word just jumps out as it is not a normal occurrence. There has been an increase of it regardless of age or social standing and it is indeed scary. It is a disease, a mental one where nothing but darkness abides. A place where one feels totally alone and useless to himself let alone society. It has very many different reasons and getting to the root causes is crucial to take care of it before it literally leads to more pain. The only suicide elements you can spot is in yourself and closest people around you. There is the need to identify why and how your brain operates, and act on it instead of the reactions we normally rush to after the incident.

My dad taught me some life lessons that have been handy in this lone path when recuperating from the brain operation. This despite him trying to assist the recovery walk, but sadly brain issues are so personalized you cannot delegate your mental health on anyone. The lessons being to always do your homework when young looked like a punishment; but it made you always ready for any occurrence, that the last minute could never have sorted you out from. The beauty of honest hard work cannot be underrated especially in this era of *chap chap* success that it has to be built one brick at a time.

The most important requirement from him was to serve God as he has done. Even though I do it on a different platform in my own way, I am a pastor's kid (PK), who delivers sermons on life in his own way.

We should seek to open mental health gyms for all of us to work out in our own capabilities on this underutilized muscle. Parents and their children need to be on the same page, as things are changing at such a fast rate that there is confusion about expectations from both parties, and it leads to miscommunication and negative approaches to combat the issue.

Clear communication assists in avoiding presumptions and misinterpretation of the message because people receive information based on their comprehension of the data served and the perception they hold of the subject matter, that if not put in the proper context will lead people to confusion.

Compartmentalization is a myth to me, because the mindset in both personal and professional projects run simultaneously in the mindset; and if one is affected it spills over to the other and vice versa. If the mind is not right it spills to all other life functions and associations. No man is an island has never been so true as when explaining the brain and its job description. When the body is sick people take medication and rest to maximize recovery period, but where the brain is involved it is not given time to restore to default settings before further pressure is added onto it.

2.7 Coping Mechanisms

One of the hardest things you will ever do is look yourself in the eye and be authentic to your own self. Dealing with an audience of one that is you, the gate keeper of all that follows with all you will interact with, so dealing with it, sorting it out, and just understanding that person is your life assignment. All conversations you will see, hear or participate in, listening to your own self will be most crucial. Everyone has an opinion but what is yours and based on is all that matters, or else you will find yourself trapped in a mass psychology of doing or being just because people are.

Man is a social being hence confusion and loneliness may lead him to drastic activities. Over indulgence in sleep, alcohol or even sleep are signs of the real symptom which man may not be able to put it into words. The brain works on images and blank situations cause panic and hopelessness.

Life does not argue with you but it makes you an offer that you cannot afford to lose because the cost is your life. It has no time table though you may have one, and society in general may be your timekeepers. That is not an issue for the bell carrier is none of them. All we can do is attend the class and participate in how best we perceive it to be. The funny thing is that the exam is not similar hence no one can steal answers from the other as they are factored for you. The art of listening to what someone says is a gem towards letting them solving for themselves

The spirit, body and soul have to be in tandem as they work in sync. When one of them is touched it affects the functionality of the rest. My belief is

the physical exercise best strengthens the mental muscle, and the soul starts humming as it senses changes in its siblings. Life experiences may look and sound the same, showing that exposure to them is irrespective of tribe and gender, sharing them give s one a glimpse of another's and hence know how to navigate their own with the knowledge that one is not alone in this life yet unique in them being themselves so the response cannot be copy pasted.

We have a sense of entitlement versus favour, in that we do not appreciate something like waking up every morning. Seeing the sun set and rise is not an ordinary thing, but by it being a normal activity does not make it so. It is a blessing granted upon us daily. After waking up just getting out of bed is another miracle, as health is.

This is because there was a time I forgot how to walk, that I had to re learn a simple thing like putting one step in front of the other. What used to be normal no longer was.

3. CHAPTER THREE

3.1 Life Strategy

What defines you as a human being in totality? Is it your gender? Your job? Your purpose? Your situation? Looking for fulfillment from others in life is not the best solution, though temporarily it works and seems to have solved the equation. Boundaries for yourself enables others to respect it and it becomes part of you subconsciously; without even knowing. This is because it has become part of you like walking, which once upon a time you could not do it, let alone even talk. Being in the moment is the best gift you can offer yourself and the person there at that moment. Children are very observant and even if they do not understand the context, they get the content through just being extremely present through the five senses.

Even in your worst experiences the version of your best self can emerge, the same as Khaleesi emerged from the ashes, and the three young men who did not even smell of smoke when they emerged from the test that changed the generation they lived in. Understanding comes from knowledge of self-first, then seeking to get the other person from their perspective. Having the whole picture one can respond to the moment, and it makes life easier; as how you are addressed is from their understanding. How you act should be from a higher level since you are comfortable in your own skin, and can get where the other is coming from.

We all are on different journeys of life but exist in the same spaces, even if from the same experiences we respond differently, as we have a background we are coming from. The mind is individual and grasps in its own way in everyone. That is why we should be more empathetic and less judgmental in any setting, for we all process things in our mind interpretation.

Someone may not get where you are, why you do what you do, and who you are in totality, for that is your life assignment to yourself. In that is where the best of you springs forth from, that self-understanding, and confidence normally comes out. Arrogance hides that as it is not a natural process.

The journey of awakening is exciting and depleting, as energy is involved and the more you give the emptier you get. Needing to get a refill is where mental exhaustion comes from, for you have depleted your capability, and need to rest. If one gets an equal energy back then they can push themselves to their optimal capability without feeling the negative exhaustion, as there is a thrill in the work at hand. When the body and mind get exhausted, then you have done all that you can and rest is a must. Hibernation is important for rejuvenation to take place.

Existing in the space called you is always a work in progress, as every interaction gives more understanding. It is exhilarating and exhausting concurrently, but enlightenment is what we should strive for.

Awareness of the present is all we need to be at. This is something we learned as kids but brushed it off in the hustle and bustle of life, while chasing so much and in the process losing ourselves. We find out that we had it all within us, yet it was not built to its optimal and when broken, remember it with nostalgia. All is not lost, as just as the way a tree can be cut down, it will still emerge as long as the stump is there. Pruning though painful did not stop it from bearing fruits when it was rained on, and it blossomed.

Being woke is the current state, and people are engaging into self-knowledge more than we did, as the environment has changed through technology and current challenges they are facing. So much has changed without actually changing, and it is a ying yang scenario.

In the squad you are at, are you aware of the role you play? Just like in a sports team, not knowing the position one plays ends up in confusion and disorganization in the whole set up.

Sometimes we lose ourselves in the moment, which is part of the process, and coming back is the art, for you may remain at that state; or can rise up to the occasion and deal with what needs to be dealt with in the right way.

Appreciating people and what they do brings out the best in them. We all seek that form of energy to fuel our endeavours, that what we do matters regardless of that which is being done.

Recently, we entered a restaurant and greeted the soldier at the door, commenting that it looked full. He appreciated the recognition in an often ignored position, and showed me a waiting table. As we surveyed a more suitable angle, he came and informed us where we need to put our bags, as itchy fingers are known to seize that which is not theirs.

I was impressed at his attention to detail of his work which was about security of the clients, and then he still came back and informed me of a table that appeared to be accessible, as he could tell they were about to leave. We appreciated his attention, and from that interaction, I also got to notice a better seat away from the entrance. It was a light interaction, but I could tell he was in his present moment throughout the time we were in that establishment. You can tell a present person based on how they handle themselves and others in their spheres of influence.

The brain works by connecting the dots, and each image surfaces when connected to another that take place at the same time period. The subconscious stores all the information and just needs to be triggered for the conscious to replay it in current time. The memory bank stores it all. Nature and life operate in patterns or are supposed to, so what happens when the pattern is broken? Confusion and despair take its place, but the line is always there; because the hindsight is the line that will guide the darkness of the future.

At a certain point in time you were at a position like the current one, but within different environments, how it was dealt with provided the strength for the future occurrence; which you did not even know would take place.

That is the beauty of life, it is not an absolute but works with variables, so if any is moved then the outcome would be different from one person to the next.

We work with the information we have, acquired over time either through experience or class knowledge. It is all based on the individuals as they are, not as what they are perceived to be. It is an internal job that works through external requirements. Moments and memories are not a waste, losing in sports is not a loss if you have given your best and lost to a better team.

What one put in to get to that space of competing is not a waste of time and resources. Some opportunities are not aligned to what you believe is capable. They are lessons to be aware of what is in your line and that which will suck out your strength. We are all trying to make sense of our lives depending on what has been thrown to us and everybody has a story to tell based on their own selves starring in life.

What defines a man? Is it the job he does or the work he puts in it? Is it purpose driven or situation ship? Is he who he says he is or what they say about him? Your credentials do not make you, you make them and lack of them does not reflect who you are, for your character does.

How one holds oneself to themselves, then to their area of expertise, is what makes a man who knows his stuff.

We all aspire for a certain ideal. Chances are that we may fall short of the planned and settle for the convenient. A true brand recognizes its own capability and expounds on those it is capable of achieving, stretching to what is not as if it were. Sadly, the perception of some is that it is the agenda of brands to stretch their truth; whereas the reality is that the opposite should be applicable. Truth matters more in this generation of fake news than the utopia. History never hides the truth, but rather it reveals the knowledge, as time has the beauty of hindsight correlation and greater technology at play.

What is your truth? You can outwit everyone but the face in the mirror will stare at you as if it knows, and guess what, it does. It is just but a reflection of the true self. It enlightens what it gets, so if it is awesomeness, the same will be achieved, even if everything will be on its opposite side. Life is meant to be lived, it is for the living even if most of us are walking zombies, as shelves of ourselves. This is due to the case that we have been rained on by life and its perceived expectations.

3.2 Tales to Tell

Our stories are what connect us to people who have or are undergoing a period in life, and it is that connection that helps us bear our conditions. We are encouraged that if someone was able to get through a situation, then so can we. That is the power of stories and it is encouraging how many stories are popping up in our society. There is one that ladies speak of their lives in all spheres that affect them, and others that you hear stories of men and you respect them even further.

In our African society we were raised not to show emotion in any of our endeavours. This was a good thing then but as of the environment we are facing, that same script has come to bite us; as seen in increased cases of suicides, murders and other vices that have cropped up and the boy child is always under scrutiny.

The platforms of such stories have increased through YouTube, blogs, social media and traditional media, which should have more content on such issues, although they have stepped up their game. On the international level the same is also happening, especially in the sport played in heaven, rugby. Men are opening up on the effect of the sport on their mental health, and even life after the professional sport receiving the importance due to it. Sometimes the only person you can trust with your dreams is yourself, even if you may also fail in that venture and start doubting yourself.

All I can say is believe the process, for the right way has always been the only way, regardless of what the world may tell you, or popular opinion might show you. Keeping the faith is an internal job, that requires emotional muscles, that need to be developed like the physical part does. One day at a time and putting in the effort with the belief that you are doing what you were meant to do, through that still small voice that makes you do you even when it does not make sense.

Life is so beautiful in this generation that authenticity is worshipped; on an equally opposite time where fake news and faking till we make it is also prime. The difference between these two is that one gives you peace of mind, and the other sleepless nights as to when the cards will fall and the revelation done. The choice in individual and corporate strategies have an outcome of short-term results versus long term ones. The determinant in these choices is character, that which one believes and stands by just like the cowboy times when word was bond, and a man was as good as his word. Learn to embrace your uniqueness when it comes to matters that are critical for you, be part of the crowd without being in the crowd; and stand out without shouting about who you are, as your inner self is doing that already.

Be like the coward of the county and step in the name of love unless it is not appreciated. It is then and only then that matters have to be spelt out as per the language understood by the recipient.

Narcissism has taken over Ubuntu that we as Africans used to pride in, man eat man society has in all sense of the word become true to its meaning and is scary. Enjoy your work, even when you do not have fun doing it.

The difference in this case is making hay while the sun shines, in that make it work for you, even if the conditions are not conducive. When you get to do what you love doing it becomes the sweet spot of joy and it becomes a passion. This is where the leadership needs to develop a culture of appreciation of the most vital resources in the system, the human capital that feels and breathes. They make the difference between a growing outfit and simply one that exists, and all these boils down to how you treat people.

3.3 Empathy

It is my belief that humans were created to be good, but over time influences occur which affect this positive flow of energy, and something evil creeps into the system. This leads to a stagnation as growth does not exist in darkness. A plant requires light to grow effectively, and the same can be said of a human being when appreciated in life. Empathy shows that it is possible for energy to move from one person to another, for you might actually feel the joy or pain in an individual and it affects you as much as it does to them, if you are in tuned to their wavelength. We normally do not get here because of all the noise around us that grabs our

attention. Being still internally gives a clarity that is eagle eyed, to the extent of penetrating the seen to the unseen, the said to the unsaid.

It is ironic that those who have seen the worst in life possess the best hearts and intentions towards fellow human beings. They have seen the lowest tendencies capable in our hearts and thus seen the light in the darkness; the normal in the abnormal, and peace in adversity. Someone not in their right state of mind should be treated the same way as a physically injured person, for they are abnormally placed. With that in mind, anything they do that is not societal should be seen in those lenses.

The incarcerated go through systems not built for human habitation and hence they tend to turn out more messed up than they were when incarcerated. the same can be said of our forces who protect us from enemies. They get to see and be in the worst environments in their duty. Once they come back to the normal life, they find it extremely difficult to just slide into the normal. The mind is a delicate place to exist in those scenarios it was not meant to. Hence, downloading or debriefing of the mental condition is critical to anyone who has been in a setting not experienced normally.

Depression creeps in like a thief in the pitch-black night, and before one knows it, they are in a spiral state of self. As the mind is always scanning past information to make sense of the present, the affected always see

themselves in a personal state of always being in danger of attack, hence are jumpy and need to escape from that journey.

Taking time to understand their perspective of self goes a long way in getting what they do what they do. As a result, finding a concrete solution to deal with the issue, not the symptoms, for there are many forms of addiction. This because we normally respond to assumptions about people and the beliefs we hold, rather than to the person as they are.

3.4 Addiction

This is forcing the brain to be at a certain state of euphoria, the problem being that is a temporal state, and when crashing happens, withdrawal symptoms are hell on earth. The difficulty is that it becomes a cycle, as one has to pump the stuff into the body for that feeling to be replicated. Every time afterwards the marginal utility shrinks and volumes increased to maintain that fake balance.

Empathy muscles need to be worked on just like the physical ones in the gym. This is to make a strong mindset that is willing to stretch; so as to accommodate experiences it may not have gone through but understands and respects that of another person.

The mob psychology thought process is clear on the social media streets, where even something morally inept has a following, and they deem it as right and free speech.

For creativity, it is chilling to even see that there is a group of people who really believe that it is right to do so. The value system has never changed and technology or lack of it are variables, so they do not determine the absolute. This has given us a chance to see thought processes that used to be whispered in closed rooms are now being cheered about in plain sight.

Many of us hate to deal with those who challenge our assumptions, and social media has made it possible for us to just choose to connect with those who do so, and dare you not do so and you will be met with wrath and chilly words.

What you have been going through for a length of time becomes an identity if you have been in for a long time, but that situation is not the final destination and the beauty is day by day you learn new things. Moving on is not dealing with the problem as it will pile up with every experience, and unfortunately men do not talk or show any emotion deemed weak. We are in the generation of conversations, which is the best thing possible as we were raised to handle it like a man. Working on the inner man is a lifetime exercise, for the core to remain strong.

When you are a child you are not even aware that you exist and yet you are so happy at the state you are in, commit a mistake and cry then return to normal settings of joy. That is how we are supposed to be as a natural state, happy and contented. Yet life steps in and with its burdens we are not able to recall that state.

The destination may not be known, but the destiny maker is in full control, and that is why we can trust google maps even if we are not certain that where we are headed is the right direction, the desired place will be reached regardless of the current situation.

The story you share to yourself about your self is the most important story you will ever tell, because you live in that body on a daily basis, from your first to your last breath. There are aspects about yourself that only you are aware of that even to you may not make sense but are still part of you. The same thing goes to experiences you have had in your life complete you in total because had they not happened then the current you would not be there.

3.4.1 Why do people indulge?

In order to feel good, or high as it is claimed. At the same time others do it to forget circumstances, all I can speak of is my experience, and things I am passionate about bring about the same endorphins associated with that. Thus, that chemical is always in the brain that provides happiness and sadness depending on the dependence on it. That is why there is a link between addiction and mental health. Reformation rather than punishment should be the preferred direction in society, as people rely on temporary mental crutches to get them through the day, which may become life dependency.

3.5 Hope against Hope

The logic of life is that it is illogical, but sense is made through its patterns which differ from one person to the next in that we are all different yet have similarities based on our cultural set up and experiences. Life does not make sense because it is meant to be purposeful, and in that path you can only do your best and be hopeful that it is enough to move one to the next step, and this is why hindsight provides a sort of peace in that if you manage to come this far, then the future is also in good hands. *Ceteris Paribas* is what is meant in the business world about the environment, which when held constant one tries to plan, yet life does not operate on these conditions; as it is as diverse as possible. What the human mind can best do is be malleable to adapt to any circumstance and this is by working on one's own inner self day and night as that is what is within the grasp.

The rest are variables and the only absolute is the Maker, who knows the beginning from the end. That does not make one hopeless to time and whine of life, but complete to live in the present as if it was the only thing we have, which is true. We have built so much technology and life are at such a fast pace, yet it seems as if we forgot the most important element, the mindset. This is the source of all that greatness yet we treat it as a by the way. The mental muscle strengthens the emotional aspect and in return the physical one can operate at its peak. Once the brain gives up everything else is at a standstill.

3.5.1 What is your Tactic of Disagreement?

A kid's mentality is one that we all fall to as a default setting, of how we are supposed to live, apart from the toilet training aspect. Children are always happy, eager to explore. They cry when necessary and also when not, as that is a communication strategy, and they are quick to forget and easily move on. They look at you as if you are the world to them and at that point it is true. Apart from the dependency part, which when gone we remember and desire it, they grow up and their world becomes larger and open to new environments which we can try to have boundaries over, but time and life will happen to them as it does to everyone. A bird's mentality is to wake up at the break of dawn and seek for food as they chirp about it. There are as many species of birds as there are human beings.

Someone told me that it must be great that I cannot recollect some memories, whereas the opposite is true for me in that I would love to access all that has made me to be who I am at this moment in time. This is because erasing any part of you that happened in the past does not mean that it makes the present any better, but rather leave on with more questions than before.

From my experience it is amazing re discovering why I do what I do and it is not accidental, but rather a pattern can be posted and the aha moment strikes me because of the power of hindsight where I now have the entire image and can be able see it for what it is and not what for it should have been.

A case in point is that I can spot why I hold some values, habits and character traits that are uniquely mine and based on this journey we call life. We are a sum total of all our experiences in that specific path that we all go through but is tilted because we all seek similar stuff while we are very different but more united by that which holds us in common than that which differentiates us and therein lies the quagmire of adaptation to be one true self yet still be part of the bigger community.

Internal toxicity is dangerous because it just does not affect the carrier, but it infects all that they come into contact with. It is an internal job and can be traced to a trauma that has not been dealt with or is even unknown that it needs to be sorted out.

Carrying past baggage is so exhausting and unhealthy. For no matter how hidden, it finds a way of expressing itself. In our day to day interactions we all introduce ourselves as an expert in a certain field, yet the most important expertise is our knowledge of ourselves, which we do not learn in any class that I have attended, but is an inside job. The expertise we introduce ourselves as will be at its optimal level if and only if the internal expert has been dealt with.

4. CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 Self-Mastery

Mastery of who you are based on how you occupy the space around you, starting with the one inside you, will determine finding the connectors on the area you seek to excel at; to sniff at the opportunities and just be happy with yourself and not expecting it to come from any stimulant, situation or person. A stimulant can be over indulgence in something, a situation being a rosy image than the current one. For one to be their best self and a person is pegged to provide that wholeness; while it is not supposed to be their job description in the role they play in your life.

Art imitates life as it is a mirror of what is happening around a society at a given point in time and stores the experiences for posterity or lessons. Where we are at life is imitating art as things on a daily basis look stranger than fiction. Who you are is not what you have gone through, but what you have become, after what us sportsmen call post-match analysis. I love hearing what both sides have to say after a game because both sides are part of life and how you handle either determines your worldview. Life is not about and has never been about winning, even if losing hurts it is a variable of living. The response determines new challenges which will definitely come and if you have left it all there the expectation does not really matter as you did what you could and the other is just perception as you hold the context within you.

You have to get away from it all in order to re calibrate as the normal may cause despair as we were born to be active and to challenge potential, so when it stagnates it creates an imbalance as we were made to grow physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually and the tenacity acquired makes us ready for the next step even if we may not know its requirements, we will grow further into it

Do we talk about issues or personalities? Once we take our eyes off the ball then objectivity disappears as we all seek to cover ourselves as a natural instinct when attacked and as to why it grates us so intently is the same, we should handle issues

Faith and priorities in life remain as the true anchor and trust in oneself and all the external noise will be shut out by learning in situations and adapting better as you have already covered the important bases and laying trust in the process and the outcome will take care of itself despite the delays and detours that may happen. We need to suppress our flawed human nature, as we are not perfect and hence do not expect absolutes for, we are variables

There is something about music that triggers memories back to that age when you did not even understand what it was but you loved the rhythm and it brings about tears as it reminds you of a place and time that brings about happiness even if you were to go back to that state now it will be a big no, but that in ignorance at that time it was the best and blissful.

The knowledge you possess at a point in time is exactly what is needed for then, and the best you can do is learn from the past and prepare adequately with what is in hand which we are told is worth two in the bush and therein lies the super power that what lies within is greater than what lies outside and that even though the unexpected may happen, we have the shock absorbers as we have done our service well enough despite the terrain that awaits us, we are in great hands

Life is made of hope for it lights up the fire within that fuels the daily endeavor to be better than yesterday and prepared for tomorrow. Hopelessness is the chink in the armour of youth as when we are young we believe in all that will be and not as it is, but with age creeping in in we become realistic about the mountains facing us, and depression creeps in silently of what should have been, yet what is stares at you and in that there is hope. What we need to remember is that exuberance our youth held and cling on to that for age is a state of the mind, when you give up there that is the last resort. All parts of the body can be fought out, but the fight of the mind is on another level, yet we all lie poorly equipped for it as we wing through daily, weekly, weekend, monthly and yearly demands that even milestones are not as great as they are supposed to be.

Inspiration to be the best you can be according to the abilities you were blessed with is my definition of success. That you did all you could. with what you had, to the context around it brings about peace of mind, a rare value on offer these days.

It costs everything yet nothing, in that it can bring one to their knees if not possessed and yet is free as it is based on your understanding of yourself, and fitting the rest around that which you describe yourself as just like an egg that when broken from within brings forth life, whereas the opposite results in death.

From dreams are where visions are built and they come alive, so all I can say keep on dreaming and then put in some physical effort that will provide the foundation and the castles in the sky that we were told about will have a base that is unshakable. The walls do not matter what they are made of wood, stone, sheet as long as the first task of the base was done well. The instinct we normally talk about becomes easier if the muscle is strengthened over the time as the patterns always reveal themselves, the dots always connect in life.

Confusion is normal as it is that state of mind where answers are trying to be sorted for them to make sense, and from its brilliant answers may come out or further confusion depending on how it is handled by the gate keepers. They are entitled with the experience and more information and thus expected to step up to the plate when the rubber meets the road.

With proper information comes patience and tolerance, in that just like the coward of the county one becomes aware of fights to stand ground on those to walk away from, and it is not weakness to do so.

The under belly is very sensitive and we are all scared of showing it for in that space we are vulnerable.

It is human to forget where we came from, or maybe it is selective amnesia. Many are the stories of people starting with nothing and attaining the peak of their profession. They are professionally successful, but failures as individuals, in that they oppress as it happened when they were starting out, and it is indeed a quagmire of the human traits.

It is possible to be satisfied with who you are and not with where you are. The crisis begins when where you are is confused with who you are, as position is not a measure of value, the distance covered on each individual journey however is the variable to watch out for. There might be cobwebs about where you are versus what is on your dream board, but that does not measure your worth.

What role do you play in your own life or are you just an observer like the rest, an extra in your own life or an acquaintance of your own self? We are so involved in playing roles in life we end up forgetting our own selves, to the detriment of all the other roles

Moments are better loved and experienced than taking a photograph and losing the moment, and it varies from point to point especially in the Instagram era. Living in the moment is the image that the brain stores, the feeling it brought, the feeling you enjoyed and the appreciation it provided.

The photo taken only served to re-create the emotion felt that I might have forgotten, so embrace the process and the place you are at, for it will remain as a memory, and you better have soaked in it and not just tip toed through it.

Travelling assists in giving us a new perspective and grow because we stretch out individual boundaries not to just be the worldview we have, but to engage in life. Books, and movies also do the same to the mind, as well as sports the global language. Through life you create bonds that have a certain meaning that either exists for a season or surpasses time. When you question the reason for your existence one ends up questioning even the tributaries that join your life because they will affect you as the distributary in that what you feed is what you release to the world.

When writing about your life is an introspective process, how I wish it was like writing a composition where one just had to be creative with words, which we used to call bombastic, in order to awe the teacher and listeners of it in case it was readout aloud in class.

Recuperation was a healing process, for I came to understand myself more by putting it down in form of words. Looking at them brought shock at what we go through and keep under wraps, yet they do not disappear or we do not celebrate what should be; because we are busy trying to prove that we exist instead of appreciating the moment.

The only person you can heal or even control is yourself. Have you ever asked your doctor what is the cause of your ailment and even they had no idea? It was only after some time that I came to realize that even he had no answers, because he had done all that he could to sort out the external condition, and had no knowledge of the internal experience, that brings light to walking in a person's shoes to know how they feel. There are questions that do not have answers, and what can be done is managing the process of healing. This is by engaging in that which you feel is helpful to you, and avoiding that which tears you apart.

4.2 Legacy

What defines you? Can you stay true to yourself? Is there a class for peace of mind? Where does your hope come from? What inspires you? If all that you hold dear was to be taken away from you, what will you know yourself as? when life sucker punches you, how to hold on to yourself is a topic crucial for life that also we were not taught in class. When you are on your knees is the beginning of getting yourself from the hole. Anger is a cry of help for the pressure within has to be released in one form or another.

The default setting of a human being is one of peace, as anger takes up so much energy it leaves one deflated. How to avoid it is to find out what your triggers are, and do the opposite.

Unmet expectations are more of heartbreakers than the relationship ones, as one hits the mind and the other hits the heart. One can make you go mad, while the other will just make you sad.

4.2.1 When we talk about leaving a legacy, what do we mean?

Some parts of the legacy we will walk with people, yet the greatest part of it we will walk alone, and this is the scariest part for you will hear voices that may disrupt you if you do not see through them. The greatest legacies are not individual based, but live on past the year of the dreamer because it is bigger than him as it transcends material aspect that we all crave for, but penetrates into the mind and hearts of those who experience it.

When you look at the mirror and do not recognize the person staring at your things are thick. The reality becomes stranger than fiction, for the face does not possess a meaning; and in life everything exists for a purpose. Even if we may not at that point get what it is about, the roots established help a lot, as just like a tree may be cut down, as long as the roots exist it will still sprout. The foundations are everything and can be enhanced if weakened.

All the plans you may have planned for can be stopped in an instant by one thing, health. All that may be wiped out in an instant if the foundations we have talked about absorb some of the hits. What does not fade is the vision one held, and it is from this that the plans to achieve sprout from.

Having plans that have not borne fruit is disappointing, but as long as you held on to vision then new ones can be made and the result will be achieved even though on a different route. Time is the denominator as things may happen at a snail's pace, or they can rush at a moment and you wonder what they were waiting for. As long as one is ready and eyes are set on the prize then adjustment can be made for either occurrence, for the denominators never change, but the variables like time will vary as this is life.

Time in itself helps one understand why they do the things they do, like some of us concentrate on activities with noise all around us whereas someone else requires pin drop silence.

Both of these people aim to achieve an objective, but they operate efficiently in different environments. Some rely on pressure to achieve objectives whereas others just do what needs to be done when it supposed to. Some of us cram for exams while others rely on the things they learnt across the syllabus and make sense of it. Some of can quote word for word, whereas others interpret it and put it in their own words. These are the differences observed in the various stages of school learning.

In primary school we had multiple answers, where you could wing it by elimination methods. The creative section of composition and *insha* writing allowed one to dream and write what they expected as per the topic. Mathematics does not allow illogicity for an answer has to be direct.

Life does not have a formula, and thus we learn along the way. Based on the exam set for us on our individual journeys, even if we try to cheat by craning at another's exam sheet; which has absolutely nothing related to us no matter how much we want it to be. When we are young, we may not have the words to describe who we are even though we exist, and only by hindsight can we look back and see that we are because of who we were, even at that point we just lived.

In a eulogy, the dash in between the birth and departure is always silent, and that marks the length of existence on earth. Does it really describe the person you were and the experiences you went through? Wills can be written, though they only describe where the material things should go, and the manner in which the person desires to be rested.

It still does not describe who you were. Why not write it on a day-to-day basis based on the interactions you have in your life, for that is the real statement of the kind of person that you are?

4.2.2 Do choices really have consequences?

Well you may have made the right the choices, yet the effect is totally different. You may eat right, exercise and sleep the proper quantities, yet end up being struck by an ailment that you never saw coming, and you still do not know how it came about. You may do the required event when it is supposed to be done, and yet end up with an egg on your face.

This is the point where life does not make sense. What may not make sense to you makes sense to another, for just like when we were children

and some things got understood over time, so is life. Questions that do not have answers should be left to the divine authority that one subscribes to.

Personally, the divine presence that I adhere to, that is the Lord my God, who has kept me sane in the stages of unanswerable questions. Even the most brilliant people in their individual fields will fail to make sense of it. That is okay, as I have learnt that is the optimal point of their knowledge of the case. There is only one who knows the beginning from the end, and to Him are we answerable to by what was given unto us, because that is what we are answerable to, that which is in our hands.

This is the point where the topic of grace and favour comes, because the two go hand in hand. No one has ever qualified for either, but they are given regardless of the individual's background, current status or even how they think about themselves.

When it is given, it has no reasons to the person it is handed to, though there might be other circumstances that they are not aware of, that was the input of someone else that they are not aware of. This is why the term self-made man is a bit of a quagmire, as it is not a result of the work put in that makes one a success, but the process they undergo in doing so. If it was about input, then the young men I see at quarries and pulling carts should be extremely successful based on the energy they put in the daily work.

If it was educational smarts, then we would have the professors as the wealthiest individuals. Remember that just because you have not achieved

your intended desire, despite the sacrifices that only you know of, it was not in vain.

The scholars of history will tell you time and again that those who stood on the right side did it because they stood up for what they believed in. Not for posterity but because they could do what they were capable of at that particular time. Living in the moment ensures you get to enjoy each and every thing through your five senses. It does not mean that you have not planned for tomorrow or do not remember yesterday; for unto each day there is a meaning, and the moment is all you have and need now.

You cannot be all things to all men, you can be all that to yourself regardless of the stage in life that you are at. Whatever you are to inner self will reflect back to the society. The energy spent on being two faced is exhausting, so why not just invest it all in being you?

Those who appreciate what you have to offer will be attracted and vice versa. I find this to be a key pillar in any relationship. You can only get as good as you give, yet what we normally expect is for someone to bend over backwards for our requirements. To be your best self means giving your best regardless of the external environment, as that is what is in your capabilities, otherwise to control another person is akin to slavery and we know how that ends up.

With great technology one would have thought that great communication would have been the result, but it seems as if there is more

miscommunication and disagreements than the time when we only referred to letters and call boxes to communicate. We never bounced but kept time so precise that we may not fail to meet the person, for that is all we had to get in touch.

The *wahenga* as we call the wise of yore in Kiswahili, were aware of these occurrences; even if we are of the impression that in their days, it was only smoke signals that kept them in contact. The same as systems, the current great communication developments were made to serve man and not vice versa. The human touch can never be replicated even as we enter the robotics era. That connection one gets when they meet with the squad cannot be put even in the group WhatsApp, because that human connection cannot be replaced.

When in the process of finding yourself, it may look like foolishness to somebody else but keep on keeping on. This is because if you can take whatever that life hands you and make something good from it, then you will have fought and emerged with scars that remind of the path, not the complete story but part of how you survived.

4.2.3 What is your Validation?

Is it person-based, a scenario, or your capability? Remain firm in the values, but flexible in the process. Do you have great expectations? That is where faith kicks in dealing with that which is not there as if it were.

The brain has the direct memory platform where the last thing you did is what is at the top of mind. When I woke up in the hospital, it was not time based or accident contexted, and that is why I woke up angry to find myself in a hospital, whereas some few minutes earlier I was just exhausted and not in a critical condition. Life is remembered on such a platform, the memories held at points in time that mean something individually to the person experiencing them. I remember places by landmarks, not their names. This is funny because even when growing up I remembered places by buildings and not the streets they were in.

We all have different experiences in this journey called life, and different objectives on how it is what it is. The many platforms that have emerged for people to share their stories are amazing. As a community we are relearning our experiences, something that had disappeared but was a crucial part of our history. Where our ancestors passed on information through storytelling and songs, as well as rituals; which gave them an identity from one culture to another.

We are now a global community that even geography has nothing on us, as technology has made the world smaller. We can relate to experiences from all over, and find out that we are all human, with more in common than the differences that separate us.

We are here to be and then to do what we can in our generation, after which it is all about passing the mantle to the next in line. We do not need to be in a platform of power to cause change within our circle of influence, for we have that power source therein. Just like a ripple on water, the more you do what you are needed to do, from that nucleus that is the core of your being, then the ripples will take care of themselves, for you have dealt the necessities to your ability.

When in the pit, remember the dream and when you have achieved the dream, do not forget the pit. The human frailty sadly does not balance the two very well, to be defined by circumstances is building on sand, for just like the swaying tide, so does the days of our lives as it is not a constant but consistency should be.

Are you just living through the stages of your life, or are you intentionally involved in each and every aspect of it, from when you wake up to when you lay down? Introspection is not easy but it makes the state one is in easier, as from comprehension comes understanding.

To my younger version speak your truth, and remain adamant about it. With age you will finally understand why you did the things you did and that your intuition was not madness, but that internal compass that you were born with. This with time has been interpreted and used differently in contexts but it did not lead you astray.

4.2.4 Do you have a Life Vision?

Even the process of coming up with this book did not abide by the plans I thought I had, and so I followed the stream as it so fit, adding one word at a time. It looked like a confusion of ideas, but deep down I knew what to be expecting as the end product. Creativity is messy at the beginning, confusing at the middle, and a work of art at the end. It is a replication of life, as that is how things go despite intense plans. Therein lies the importance of vision, because that never changes even in the quagmire.

That is why I love strategy, for it is a reflection of life and is patterned that begins and ends with the vision. With it you are half way done, without it you are eternally lost. From it is where mission steps in with, specific objectives that need to be met precisely. An academic thesis is structured in that manner to find a problem and come up with the solutions.

Give credit where it is due, and appreciation of what has been, and will be. I loved books when I was young, and they saved me as an adult. I have realized that trying to write like the ones I have read is futile, and so I flowed with whatever was in my mind, and I heart. Currently listening to the songs that take me to places that even my memory gets impressed at the exercise it is being given; to rejuvenate senses that are stuck in the library of me, myself and I.

4.2.5 What is your Personal Brand?

It is my belief that knowledge was meant to be understood and personalized, thus be a solution; instead of being a rigid abstract that is

just vomited to prove efficiency, while effectiveness is not localized to be impactful to the audience it is addressed. It was meant to be consumed by the community for they raised you, rather than for personal glory and redundancy.

Unless it is shared, then it has no value. Exchanging of ideas creates more and the best of them gets to be easily implemented as well as beneficial to the addressed audience. This is unlike when an IT friend who suggested that branding was a hoax, where people were forced to purchase that which they did not need. It was the exact opposite of the same definition, because it is an extremely emotional process, that requires a relationship built over every experience with the product, in fulfilling what is of importance to the client.

4.2.6 Are you at Peace with Yourself?

The most important exam I have ever sat for has been that of me recollecting who I am as a person. This is because I could look in the mirror, and have no clue about the image staring back at me. The beauty of it is that it was a reflection, and such remained as such depending on the value the holder placed on it. The feelings of worthlessness are fights in the mind that, if not fought well lead to a dark place that is extremely scary and inhuman. We are not meant to go to such depths in life, for there is a very thin line between life and death at that state.

The realization came that all that I have ever been through led to that point in time. That I was adequately equipped to run this race took time, and that is all that is required, time and the knowledge of being able to handle whatever is thrown your way. The beauty of hindsight stepped in to give flashbacks of the small wars that lead to this, and you managed them all.

To be able to handle that which looks like a mountain, but when broken down each day at a time, ends up being a mole hill. Finding peace within oneself is a daily effort, a muscle that is often ignored or even unknown until it stops working, and then everything screeches to a halt. That which you thought was important no longer matters, as clutching to life straws is all one can endure.

Going back, way back, back into time through history, music and experiences garnered over time is an endeavour that was necessary to bring back the lost memories that were there, but needed triggering to respond as required.

Introspection was the golden word that my primary school teacher had impacted unto me, and it took twenty years for it to gain meaning in my life. Our music teacher used that word so much, yet it held little weight to a young man who was living through school by the adventures of books and just loved reading.

The seed he planted has brought forth this paragraph, that lead to others, that over time have brought you the reader to this point in time.

That man loved music and maybe that seed also came from him, we will discuss the power of music later on, even though the G clef and F clef the last time I saw them I was in first form, as part of the school choir. The reasons for joining it are of a different nature, as I joined to avoid being monolised because the practice used to take so long, that by the time we were done, everyone was asleep, including the terror squad of fourth formers. A better reason was that of ‘funkies’ where it was a privilege for a first former to even step onto the school bus, and attend out of school functions, where the word funkies came from. Writing about this memory brings laughter to mind.

This chapter seems to be about the teachers who left a mark in my life, without knowing what they were doing outside their job description. This reminds me of my English teacher in high school, who was concerned about events that had transpired related to me, and sought my thoughts on the same. This was the exact opposite of another one, who I had confided in, persecuting me for the same topic I had looked for guidance.

My language teachers were the best and maybe this led me to enjoy then excel in English, Swahili and French. This is because subconsciously the mind had positive interactions, as they were into their craft. How they expressed it still lingers in how their subject matter has left an impact in my life.

My French teacher visited me in hospital and I really appreciated that despite all those years, there was a connection. I met my Swahili teacher in town and we laughed about life, something rare in my life because teachers were to be seen and given distance. My higher education lecturer could read an assignment I had done, and tell me that was not my level and to re do it. I respected that, for she truly read my work, and was aware when I had just winged a paper. This thoroughness came to be tested when I was defending my thesis and one of the panelists claimed that I had plagiarized the document because of a mistake. The supervisor stated that from day one of choosing the topic, I had done the due process of the thesis, that I be allowed to re defend the thesis after correcting the anomaly.

I am grateful for these educationists who saw me as an individual and not a statistic in their daily teaching life, for the mark they left has contributed to my purpose. The discussion of the others who left scars in life is not worth the mention, even if the negative experiences still played their part; without which we would not have been ready for the battle that lay ahead.

That reminds of something I saw written about life traumas. Those that we may have experienced at home, school and work environments, that we carry on as normal. This is because it has been part and parcel of us for so long, we have adopted the *Stockholm syndrome* where we embrace our oppressors and there is no room for dialogue.

Children appreciate what money buys, not on the money itself. We do the opposite in adulthood, putting value on the money, and not appreciating what it provides as we used to when young. The value we have come to attach to money has brought about negative value of winning at all cost, where stealing is no longer an issue, how much is the issue.

The next generation are more aware of their rights than we did at their age and we are not amused by that. Yet they do not seem to own the responsibility that comes with their decisions, as they fall back on their age for doing what they have done and there is the confusion.

No junks were created and life is not a winner loser formula, because if it is there will always be somebody better at what you do than you claim to. If that was the definition of yourself, then you would have already lost it. By doing better than you did yesterday, then keep on, if not then recalibrate and find what transpired and be easy on yourself, for life will not.

4.3 Life Choices

They depend on the information we had; at that point we were making them. When going to school, the nearest one used to be the one we got to attend. This is unless the guardian saw it fit to attend another based on whether it would give one a better chance of doing well in the final exams that determined another school choice. Here is where the cycle was repeated of which high school would make one excel.

After four years, campus choices came about and the best profession based on your grade and desire left it to the calling you would get. Seeking for employment was also in the same structure. If you put your worth in the life choices that have led you to where you are, what would happen if it was to be taken away from you, and what would you be left with?

True worth lies in your definition of yourself, as that would leave the footprints in the hearts of those you interacted with doing your time on this earth, and that is legacy. It can be imitated but never duplicated, as the original is always the classic. The rest are samples for the new audience. The most important skills are learnt by doing them. Like living a fulfilling life, you can read all the self-help books, but have to do the work of localizing them to your situation; and finding your own answers, as they can give you the direction but you have to walk to find it out.

The desire to be cool has always existed, but in each generation the environment was the difference. The people we looked up to as well determined the hip.

Like it is said, there is nothing new under the sun, so it is matter of tweaking the information to the context it exists in as the audience has changed, and so has the game. Everyone creates hype that their days were the greatest and life challenging; such that the current generation they are addressing has gotten it easy.

4.3.1 What is your identity?

You are supposed to be a reflection of your own self, like when you stare in a mirror, but what happens when you do not; and literally forget the image staring at you? I had to go back mentally through the many images that had been from birth to those of now, and believe you me the mind stores a lot. An example is we were going somewhere with my pal's daughter and she started giving me math questions of adding numbers. She looked amazed at my ability to add them without a drop even if she was not sure that I was right, but I was sure of them, and that moment triggered the memory of why I knew that.

In lower primary behind the math's book were the tables that we were required to cram, and over two decades later that memory made so much sense. I had some notes of different denominations and she was amazed at how many they were, as opposed to the higher currency I had but since they looked fewer, she thought they were not more valuable than the many wads. Value is not the amount, but the quality enforced on them. Money used to be in cowrie shells, and that was the exchange means of value in trade.

4.3.2 How will our Generation be defined?

In the Greek mythology, the days of the Greek warrior Achilles, it was with pride to state that you lived in his times, as well as Hector of Troy.

For they were great soldiers, and their generation associated with them as legends. The generation of Muhammad Ali talk with pride of the man who stood for them, and though he stood alone, his beliefs have echoed into the following generations. The same can be said of Bruce Lee who carved out his name as a legend, even if he passed on as a young man. The same can be said of *Sankarra*, the man from the country of upright men.

These were young people who stood for what they believed in, and it has withstood time as your values are foundation by which you build your brand, and if you remain truthful to its values, then what you stood for will even be there when you are not present, or even in the room where decisions are made. Your destiny ties with that of others and does lie in solitude, but it is those connections that lead it to be legendary.

4.3.3 How do you handle despair?

The uniqueness of near-death experiences is that the lenses one used to look at life changes. This is the same for any period of life when one goes through traumatic incidences, things do not go back to normal operation. This is despite the desire that they might just do so, as the burden one carries as result are painful as they are foreign, and if not well dealt with will keep on resuscitating themselves in the life of the individual.

They will make one get bitter, then heal for staying at that bitter stage is where destruction happens.

So, knowing how to grieve in whatever manner is necessary for the healing process to continue. It is during this process that rhetoric questions

occur, for no answers can be found on earth and heaven is silent, so faith may wane as humans are used to searching for answers of everything, and when none are found, despair sips into the soul, which is not a pretty sight when the straw that one hangs on is all they have.

This is where that even in the silence one's faith is tested, because without having it, the negativity is enough to drive one mad, but in that silence there is peace, where that part of the body the soul can only be filled by the creator, the one who knows what is happening for you are His creation. The why and how you were going through that which you are is not a surprise to the One who knows the end from the beginning, as He knew you even before you were born, and knows why you exist in the circumstance you do. He is well aware of your purpose.

So, after all is said and done the human capacity to grasp all that transpires in their life is futile. The best one can and should be engaged in is living it fully, in every moment, as that is the individual assignment we are entrusted with. As we influence the circles we are involved in positively, basically by more of our actions than rhetoric, as they speak louder than words.

They are fueled by the belief we hold to make this world a better place than we found it. The social surroundings can either provide hope or confusion, so it is important for one to have a positive influence around, for your fuel may end and it may be necessary to have someone else step

in the gap for you. Even if they may not know how to deal with what you are experiencing, they are there for you. I am grateful for those who were and still continue to be there even if it is not physically present, but their prayers have been heard.

4.4 Friendships

Male relationships have inner circles, and acquaintances which include workmates and interactions made. Spartans means brotherhood, we may be different people, even our backgrounds, but that leave no man alone culture is what we share, and these men act more than talk. The memories created in my twenties was by the *Spartans*, they are found in all aspects of that period in life, and they have been my other family as we have grown older and met the challenges of life in happiness and sadness, of which life is made up of. They are men of *nyadhi*, full respect and salute to them.

Your entrance to and departure of twenties were heavily influenced by this group of young men. They had each other's backs in the field of rugby, and off in the field of life, making mistakes and standing up as we grew as men in our individual capacities. Those who joined later and still join all spheres of these men are blessed to be in their circles of influence for those specific seasons of life.

4.4.1 What is your circle of influence?

This is the space you occupy physically in the external form, and internally in the mental one, that connect in the external set up with those

who are close to you, and the environment that you have a say in. That includes family, close friends, and acquaintances, the further away from you the less impact you hold.

Remember the core of this circle is self, as this is the point from which everything else flows. The rest being variables as they are dealing with their own circles. So, the control is from within to the outside, not vice versa. When young and growing up, the opposite is true, as one is learning from the external as they are yet to fully express themselves physically, let alone emotionally which is where the rubber meets the road; for intellectually and emotionally are not the same, yet we confuse the two.

Have you ever noticed if you are interested in something you see it popping everywhere? The mind has a way of connecting desires to reality and dreams kind of show the outcome, yet one has to wake up and make it a reality. We call it goals, squad goals, couple goals, though individual goals need to be met for these other goals to actually be involved in completely, as a human being in totality control of all spheres of life.

Many are we with scars from the past, in different elements and degrees that need to be dealt with in due time with right remedy. Everyone expected everything to return as it used to be, but a new normal had to be established that even I was not aware of. Your priorities will be based on what you value, and it makes one put time and energy on what really

matters to them; hence ending up saving both as they are put where they will optimize the owner's priorities. When one is intentional at their journey it bears clarity and fewer mistakes are made, and the journey becomes bearable

Children are always born innocent, and learn the negative side of life as they grow up, and so even adults can unlearn that evil vein as the natural settings of a human being is peace, love and growth. Unless with proper information, human beings judge based on that which they hold at that given point in time. Hence assumptions are normally made which do not reflect the reality on the ground, thus the importance of clarification of data because it tends to change from one form to another.

The path you are on is the one meant for you at this point in time, for it is all you can deal with. The expectations that did not go as planned have not prevented you from getting to where you were needed to be, the path may have changed but the individual in that journey is still the same. The detours, the perceived challenges, defeats and wins have made you as of now.

Therein lies the power of hindsight. For looking back, you get to see the milestones covered in a path you never saw, and even if you did the outcome has come with mementos along the way. The gratitude is that you are able to look back and appreciate that you made it, not in the

planned manner, but you still made it; regardless of what lies ahead, and this far we have come we did not do it alone.

No skill is ever wasted, even if it has not been utilized for the longest time possible. The brain has saved it somewhere and when it will be needed, it will do its bit to regurgitate the desired information. All that you learnt as a child you use or do without even thinking about it, for it has become normal. That is how skills adapt, for when used countlessly the brain moves it to instinct, as it bothers with further complex activities.

Music plays a vital role in reminding one of letting the main thing remain thing; for there are songs you hear and they pierce through your soul and really speak of your situation, reminding you that you are not alone in the fight you are currently at. The power of music cannot be overstated. Finding that thing which resurrects your dreams is important, music does that and the uplifting genres vary from one person to another.

4.4.2 Is contentment the same as satisfaction?

We use these words interchangeably, although they mean different things depending on the context they are used. Being content is being at peace with where one is knowing they have done all that is within their capability up to that point in time.

Satisfaction is being aware that one has had enough and replenished. Nothing is as fulfilling as relating your current process with what you remember from childhood, and see the connection that you are on the right track in this journey of life; even if it swerved off its course. You got the

whiplash, but your younger self reminds you that all is well, as when you were young you lived day upon day, one foot at a time, and you have made it.

The brain grasps a lot but not everything, and that is why note taking is so important, because it will give the mind an idea of what transpired then the brain will bring forth information it had gotten. It stores according to the need and requires to be reminded of the necessary from the norm.

Thinking in seconds as you prepare for the week ahead, and month, year as well as future plans are done simultaneously, and if not controlled one can get overwhelmed as that is too much information to be processed at once. Hence, doing the now and having planned for the rest, enjoy the ride as things do not always go according to plan, but make sense as the end is known. A lot changes in a second, so just owning the present and being conscious will help deal with the unknown, for the best you can do about it, you already have with that in your grasp.

4.4.3 What are your Default Settings?

That which you resort to when situations come, that are normal to you because you do not think even when doing them, because they are part and parcel of who you are. The external recognize you through that which you express as a result of that setting, which comes in all shapes and sizes as well as hues.

Some of us panic, others rise up to the occasion while others are indifferent, and once you get that which makes you operate the way you do; life becomes easier to respond to by action rather than reaction for you are aware of yourself. So, the response hesitates for a millisecond as you process the situation, a muscle when more used strengthens.

Marketing occurs in the same way, in that when having a purchasing process, some of us look for the quality while others will notice the quantity, that is price of the object. Another one will do what we call impulse buying. These are the purchase decisions that happen and we might change why we do it depending on the frequencies of logic, emotion or external pressure at that time. We oscillate on those three variables depending on the environment, and the history of the product personally or through someone else's experience. In terms of strategy even the process can fall victim, but as long as we know what to expect, it is easier to decide.

Communication and comprehension of the message are dependent on the content and context, as well as the giver and the receiver of the information, and in this age of so many apps the above are not really applicable, as we act or react to messages instead of processing them and then relating to individual interpretation, then getting the understanding according to one's relation to the topic at hand.

Have you ever read comments of discussions and just laughed at the creativity we have? Memes have stepped in as part of our culture and are just on another level, when used correctly it brings joy hence maintaining the balance of the service providers.

Just be ready your chance will come, not the one you may have thought of, but the one meant for you at its right timing; not yours even though you had a calendar of events. That is life and being ready is all you can do, the season will find you ready as long as you have sown, regardless of the weather currently, you planted when it was dry.

Work ethic cannot be seen on the resume, hence it is not as easy as just replacing one person for another, for people work differently and provide unique perceptions of the same thing. There is nothing as boring as having one perspective and experiencing the same thing over and over again. The mind gets excited by different challenges at the right environment.

Experience is slow and comes with mistakes along the way. Knowledge somehow closes that gap as one does not have to experience what you experienced to learn, for you can share that knowledge and avoid the time and pain spent. For them to hone faster and brighter is legacy of the one whose shoulders they have stepped on to be where they are, experiences are unique and individualized.

We have a culture of wastage, whereas the ability to survive on a few is the mastery of life. If you sweep through your life, you will find you can

survive on few stuff; and such is the same for the brain which we have filled with too many things that have been, are there and may not materialize, creating a deficit where there is none. If you are healthy mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually, then the rest will fall into place for if those are not there, the rest that you see as valuable will be non-issues. If you have a roof over your head, food on the table, and clothes that keep you warm you are in good hands.

We were told to cut our clothes according to our size, and how true it is to life as it is to the tailor literally, even though stories of tailors are for another day, of how they were blessed with the gift of garb which if they transferred to delivering the product as they had promised we would not have that perception of them.

Back to the topic, it is living according to one's means, for that is what you can and no shame should be there because if you could you would be better off, depending on the personal definition of that word. Never be ashamed of who you are, as that would be an insult to yourself, as where you are does not mean that is the final destination.

Every decision made is based on a previous experience or idea on the issue, so the better the awareness of it the better in decision making.

Why do we not use the same argument on our own selves of making the best for us, then it will be easier to make it for others as you would be on your best self. Assumptions lead to uninformed decisions, what we need

to learn and teach our children is how to ask the right questions, admission that one does not know is a step towards getting the answer, but we are wired not to accept ignorance.

What one goes through can be a motivation or excuse, I have seen more heart in people society despises than the ones we apparently bow down to. Ladies of the night had more friendship and sense of family than their clients, and they have seen all the shades of men, from all walks of life, and they know more psychology than anyone who has stepped in such a class. Those in children homes show more homeliness than the ones who actually have homes, and families, not dysfunctional ones.

4.4.4 Who are you and what do you want to be?

You will be asked this question many times in your growth, and as many they are, that you will stutter as it is an open-ended question with no defined answer. It is normal that during growth that metamorphosis happens as this the process that aid in growth, just like a caterpillar is disgusting in the larva and pupa stages.

Once you see the final outcome of the butterfly you might forget about the previous stages if you were not part of that journey.

You were born the son of a specific family, and all you knew is that you wanted to be the best version of yourself, as that would result in being all that you could be, with the tools you were born with and acquired along

the path. Now you know how to answer those two questions without blinking an eyelid, for you have sweated blood and tears to result in that version, and that was part of your individual process.

Like we have said it is very personal and specific, designed that way for each and every human being, and that product key has no master key, to re progress the functions, although the world will attempt to do the hacking many times; it is designed to come short, as the attempt will always backfire and bring forth a version that is totally unlike the manual it was made up in. In this life no one was created average, no brain looks like the next and hence there is a uniqueness to be found in everyone, remember that.

There is a joy in seeing someone excel at what they do best, it looks flawless, but what is not seen are the hours spent on mastering that craft people are applauding to, in private the challenges mounted and conquered. Let the Instagram photos not disappoint you, they cost an arm and a leg to get to that image you are drooling over, so get your walk on, your act right and the rest will fall into place; and if that was your desire, then you will look at yourself the same way you do at those you crave to be like.

What you have spent your life seeking has always been with you as it is a part of you that needed time and the process required for it to emerge. The patience had to be learnt along the way, for that was never a strong

element of you.

Learning has come with some scars, proof that you went to war and came back battered but living to tell the tale. That make the scars beautiful as they are testament that you survived, own them but may they not define you, as they were part of the journey and not the end of it. Coincidences are when preparation meets opportunity, and will look like *deja vu*, something you have seen before in another setting, for it will have manifested first in the mind and then become the reality.

That is the power of the mindset, as it sees that which is not there as if it is, which is also referred to as faith, hope, expectation, dream, vision, aspiration, creativity; because all are unseen until they happen. So, keep dreaming, put the effort in that dream; be ready for the bumps, and just do it.

You will find yourself in a situation where you will not remember a single thing about your existence, for you will wake up one day and your body will not recognize your brain, and vice versa. this will happen when the period of taking medication passes, under the assumption that now you feel better, and the body will rudely reject that message.

You will look at the image in the mirror and fail to recognize the image that stared back at you. That will confuse you, and no one will get what you are going through. filling in the blanks will take time, each puzzle fitting in where needed at its own time, for memories are never forced to

restore themselves, they come at their own pace depending on the stimuli the five senses gets to recognize and link it to the many saved in the subconscious, and then give you the recognition required of that situation that triggered that process.

It will be exhausting, and interesting to learn about yourself from your own memories, and the surroundings, as well stories told from the perspectives of the people you have interacted with, and the technology reminders of communication you had with them at different periods of your past life that will remindful of who you were, who is still there and in a pimped version.

The real you never gets lost, and from the ashes, the phoenix that defines who you are and what you are about will emerge, and the coincidences become so many to confirm that you never got lost, even if it looked that way when you stared at that image and received no recognition, that almost broke you, but here you are youngster, you lived to tell the tale.

There is nothing as irritating as failing to control your space, and that is what happens when the brain is tampered with, as the reality and fiction warp into one and you are left in limbo, existing but not there, physically present but mindfully not. when your health goes from perfect to comatose in minutes, even you holds no answers to this date about what transpired, if even the doctor could not predict how the convalescence would be hell, you just leave it to the Manufacturer; who knows the beginning from the

end, and makes the unexplainable make sense to the eye of even the person in that condition.

Daunting is the task of trying to recall every minute part of your existence, when even the basics of yourself is hazy. Something about memories is they never lost, for they remain imprinted in your library, and the connection they hold to you is sourced once the image appears, and every emotion that was carried at that time floods back, for the heart had also sent the emotions of that image to be stored together with it.

That will be your saving grace and your source of despair at the same time, for there will be that period of your life that everyone is talking about and you played no part in it, apart from being the issue under all that scrutiny, of which no recollection is in the memory bank, and that is why you seek the perspectives of anyone who was there how it was so that you gather the puzzles and get an image of what took place, and how it did.

The brain is a tender body part, and its healing has not been instantaneous as we thought it would be, and that is why you may be part of a crowd and even they are not aware that you are lost and yet you are not for the external gives no evidence of the turmoil within, hence the strangeness in this path as you can never tell someone is out of their normal self, as information about mental health is shaky and society frowned upon to discuss feelings, experiences in general.

The kryptonite almost fulfilled its intention as it crippled him heavily mentally. One memory at a time you will discover filters are not your best friend, and you state how you feel without chills as the hip say nowadays. You will laugh at this as that trait has not made you so many friends as you adapt to your surroundings while still maintaining your authentic self. This you discover along the recovery process.

Lessons learnt include understanding oneself is important as others may judge according to their perception, as your truth never changes despite any accusations or disputes that may arise.

You may not understand your journey, just seek to understand yourself and the rest will fall in line, as that inner voice we keep hearing about is your authentic self-needing recognition amidst the brouhaha that life throws our way, and after all is said and done, as well as written, the contentment acquired in the path is worth everything it took to get there.

It is true that the mind has a reality of its own, and unless you put it in the right frame, you will always live in a scenario that is not yours. When all is said and done, memories are all we have, and knowing you lived at all those moments is what we live for.

There are too many information platforms and seemingly impossible to sieve through the amount that is processed per second even in one platform, so self-knowledge kind of helps do that for you are so aware of what you need in your growth pattern, and the method does it for you that

you immediately see what is helpful and discard that which is not convenient to you.

Decision making becomes simplified as one may freeze from all the options available, instead making the best with what works and seeing the minute immediately and correcting. This is true in private life as it is in public sphere, putting first things first, which means you have the basics sorted out.

The brain operates like a computer, so it opens various tabs as you think or do something, as all these operations are operating behind the scenes as you focus on what is at hand. This is because the senses are five and doing their work as you do yours, so you might see something as you were walking and immediately; it starts relating what you are seeing to its relevance to you, as you walk, eat or do the task in front of you.

Managing this requires a personalized format of organizing the information, like just noting down what is necessary to be remembered as even if the mind saves a lot of information, the speed of accessing it and even remembering to do so is dependent on how it is boxed.

4.4.5 Whose Message do you Trust?

When growing up, the parents' word is everything. They are the universe and you revolve around it, though it seems the opposites as when tiny anything you do is scrutinized and attended to in the speed of lightning. This is until you get the grasp of your motor functions, and the brain goes

out jogging in the new environments of school and interaction with new people that the universe you knew shrinks and the one you did not know expands.

You get bombarded by all that information, relating it to the premier ones that had been established in you, be they good or bad the foundation is being set up one brick at a time. The trust you held starts wavering as you experience new horizons, and it is up to you to process the information and act on it.

Trust in yourself is strengthened by exercising it, as well as the boundaries to see how far they stretch, as all kids attempt. Some of us are very specific about where we place things, as once they are removed, we are restless as we are used to them being somewhere specific, and we can literally see where we placed them.

Mental energy is more exhausting than the physical one. The brain stretches up to a certain point when it locks, and nothing else can occur until it reverts to default settings. Knowing how to work it automatically is also individual.

Some of us operate with noise in the background, while the rest prefer pin drop silence. As long as the objectives are met then these are just personal methods of getting there. Being able to lead one's thoughts on action and reaction is one step in leadership, for if you cannot lead one, let alone two,

get back to ground zero and set the pillars before embarking on introducing new variables into that setup.

Using what you have to get what you want moves one a step ahead, and the next query would be if that is a want or a need. If it reflects your priorities then you have a clearer picture of the intended action. We are all selling and buying something in life, and what is good for the goose is also good for the gander.

4.4.6 What is your Process?

Taking risks, calculative ones, for on the other end are lessons learnt, and nothing beats the process. That is where the meaty side lies, the end is the bones after feasting. This gives you an opportunity to take chances when they present themselves, for they disappear just as fast.

Starting sets the ball rolling, there will be set backs, but just start and they will be sorted out as you gain the experience muscle and become a guru at that which once scared you.

When you find yourself repeating the same thing, just take a break and find a different view point, or realize that you have reached the end of a phase, and a new one approaches, so just flow with it as it is part of the process.

The brain is always in a recalibration mode as per the information it receives, in context with the one it holds in the server, so that it comes up

with the best understanding of the event. you may have been used to doing something in a given way, however things change with time and adaptation is the super power held to keep at par at what you are good at.

A hundred-year-old companies still hold the same vision, but have survived as they have included technology of each stage of their existence to meet that vision that started them on the first place. Others have fallen to the side for they failed to read the signs of the changing times, and despite being the leading go to in their industries, they were swept aside and remain as footnotes of what not to do. Systems and structures are supposed to adapt to the core essentials of their existence, as those who lead them do the same.

4.4.7 Who do you see?

Number of likes have become the new measure of a person's worth. Those applications which were meant to be platforms of people coming together and sharing their best moments can result into a cyber bullying space.

This shows how bruised we are as a generation, that we fail to appreciate someone's glow, as we cannot see our own. Unlike poles always attract, anyone pouring out negativity is seeking that positivity and is not even aware of their state until they come face to face with what they are spewing.

We can be in charge of our space, and once we deal with that it does not

change you no matter the one you find yourself in, as the internal energy will overpower the external influence, you will feel the spring in your step, the smile you portray will be the real thing, plastic one is not even healthy for the environment. You will treat success and failure in the same breath, as they are the ebbs and flows of life, and marvel at every moment you find yourself in, for then will you have discovered the meaning of intentional living.

Provision is very personal to a man, and when he feels he cannot provide to his best ability, it messes him up mentally, in another angle men seek to acquire more and more not for provision, but just for the thrill and just kill because they can. This is an unnatural way of life as the lion hunts to feed the pride, but when its personal pride creeps up to kill just because it can; then that resources gets depleted and wastage takes over.

As it lives in a circle of life, this trickles down to lack of the hunt in future for they died for no cause. Thus, the circle is shaken, and starvation follows.

In the same breath is submission. You cannot force a human being to bow down to you, and you are yet to do the same to your own self. We demand it, but can we give it out as the leaders of our spheres? In the same analogy of the lion, it only stretches its muscle when necessary, and spends the day as a protector. By default, its place on that pride is respected, then seen in how it conducts itself. It cannot force respect, as its strength is

known, and only growls to ward off that seeking attention in its space.

4.4.8 What is Real Power?

People respond to power and men chase after it. In all senses of that word be in the gym where we struggle to know who is strongest, by competing who lifts the heaviest weight is the alpha male. I saw some young men literally fighting over nothing, but that sense of machismo. We are chasing authoritative positions as well, to fill that thing that makes men to feel like men, but does it really?

When you help others there is a certain energy you get back by their response, that you should give it out as you would love to receive. When you meet people that build you without them even knowing what they are doing, because that is what I have learnt true friendship does; for they know a part of you that you only they can because of the interaction you had before.

The memory bank opens up to remind you about everything related to an event. What you see, hear, feel, touch comes back and you exist in a space that only belongs to you, making sense to you alone, and therein lies that sense of peace that no words are sufficient to describe it. You are in complete presence of yourself first, then the environment second.

When enjoying something you adore, your whole presence absorbs it, and you remember every grass, fiber that was in that moment. Sadly, bad

events do that as well hence the reason to deal with ghosts of the past. When triggered by a certain thing, they bring forth similar emotions to the original event, and can break one down for they have piled over time and can overpower you.

4.4.9 What is your Fatigue?

We do not mean military attire, but that which drains you, and we have identified three; being mentally, physically, emotionally fatigued or even all combined.

1. The mental one is the most exhausting fatigue one can feel, and it is the worst as once the threshold is passed, coming back to normal functions will be a humongous exercise.
2. The physical is typically an exercise that you have used your body to meet a certain objective, where after it you were sore, sweaty and tired. After having some rest and nutrition, the body normally sorts itself out, and you recover.
3. Emotional fatigue involves the brain and heart as the feelings fight to make sense of the situation, and just like the mental one, it leaves one drained. If not dealt with, it will spill over to the dark side where even the brave whisper about it for it is no man's land.

Knowing how your body works will go a long way towards identifying ways of dealing with the above types of fatigue. Some people need space to get a breather and rearrange their thoughts and emotions. Others prefer dealing with it there and then. The rest choose to ignore it, even when it

stares at them in the face and pokes one to arouse some reaction; but none is forthcoming as the insides have given up. Survival is the mode in the place that thriving used to be the mantra. Pin pointing the cause of all the fatigue one feels is a step towards the healing process. Coping with that which is within your circle of influence enables the management of oneself to the best of their ability.

4.4.10 How are we living?

Are we living for the moment, or in the moment? The first is periodic in that you are waiting for that moment to happen, like we normally say we are looking forward to bring down our hair on Friday, the weekend, the public holiday, or the general vacation to live it up.

The latter takes into context the now as the moment we have control over, thus we appreciate it maximally as the next moment comes; meaning each count and we reap the most from it, so much that makes a Monday look like a Saturday when we let our hair down and relax.

That those blues we normally refer to are sent to the genre of RnB, as it talks about life, love and we dance to them. This is regardless of where we are or going through, as the mind is the best dance floor to tune into.

Whatever song you will let play will set the platform for all other actions to follow, keep it right and it will serve you, not to it and it will master over you. the brain is like the genie, willing to grant every wish you desire, but the consequences are you to deal with. Make the proper commands

and it fulfills to the letter.

I may not have all the answers, but I have the right questions, and with that we have the life exam halfway through, because the answers are extremely personal and none is wrong as the Marker takes your answers as they come.

As long as you are truthful about them, because in His class no one has ever failed, as He is that guy who brings out the best in each student, regardless of their past, or even present. He helps them exploit their potential over and above what they would have done the same by themselves.

4.5 Dealing with anxiety

Technology changes so fast, you may get anxiety that the format you used prior to when you got sick has changed. The information you held is a relic, but you will get used to the new scenario just like riding a bicycle for the first time, get grazed at a one point, fall, but still stand up and try the process all over again, as this is what life is made of, ups and downs, sideways at times, but still made to be celebrated and cherished. The process will be slower than you used to and there is time that you will get agitated for you are a fast guy, in thought as on track, and the field as well, but do we say!

Once the systems and structures fall into place you will dive in like a fish, at home with yourself and at peace with nature. The environment

notwithstanding, for each day comes with it whatever it will, but your equipment is measuring up to it, and the rhythm has come back. You are dancing to your own beat once again, as there was a time that the drums were silent; and you appreciate the process, for without it the music would have stopped.

There would not have been any joy in the morning. There exist many ways to get to your destination, so do not get stressed when one door has closed. For as long as the destination is known, the path found will still get to your intended place.

Just remember that when in anxious state some things will not make sense, so all you need to do is take a breather and they will fall into place. For you are well aware the things you excel at and those you do not; so it is crystal clear to you about what adventure you partake of. This is as your SWOT analysis is locked.

Learning, unlearning and relearning will be your greatest support system as you go through it. Information changes, but facts have never lied, as variables are known to change, adaptation will become your super power.

Old information will be updated and the past still remembered for the relevance to be gotten, and the future will become better of as the basics have been dealt with; the unknown of tomorrow planned for with the current knowledge, while still the space of that unknown not working as

desired is there. Thus, confusion then will not be an issue for you, as it was factored in.

People may not understand your process, you may communicate and still they do not, so just continue with your journey if they catch up, or do not that is life as you did all you could. The only relevant perception is the one you hold of yourself. Remember that is not being selfish, but taking care of the basic for all other functions to work as required.

Just like a newbie does with every step, the process will help you recover yourself, and you will get used to it; and work at perfecting the motions and push boundaries that had existed before. With every challenge confidence is built, and further knowledge perfects the system to operate in the prime conditions. That is how the brain gets its work done every milli second, second, minute, hour, day, week, month, year and seasons that come and go.

It stores all that information in order, not an easy task, but that is its mandate. Yours is to help it operate in the best environment internally, that will be reflected externally, as it cannot be hidden. Mental health reflects first in the brain, then through external actions which we treat as roots of the problem. They are only symptoms of what lies within and what the holder has identified as a coping method. This is where addiction arises from, as whatever the mind is fed it reciprocates in equal measure to the body and surroundings.

Conclusion

Stick to your lane and let it be lit by your own fuel, of making it happen to the best of our individual capabilities. The fuel is positivity, even when there is none to be seen, it can be sparked by that which makes you alive. Remember what used to fascinate you in childhood. In us lies that innocent young one, as well as that warrior still living the current fight, and the mind is the battle ground.

Do not forget about the power of favour in your life. What I mean is when you pass through death related events you come to realize about the fragility of life and aspirations about it. That you wake up daily and walk, eat and operate as an individual are natural until they are taken away from you. Favour is every breath you take, knowing you paid literally nothing for you being you. However, Muhammad Ali stated that what you do on this earth is the payment you can offer as nothing else can come close to the miracle of living.

A visit to a children's home took me back to the place I had been taken by books. All I saw was hope in the midst of poverty and the ability to go to any part of the world through those books I saw in the library. I saw the *Hardy Boys*, *Nancy Drew*, the *Famous Five* and finally the *Lord of the Rings* and I stopped. The power of books in movies did so much for us when we were kids than the classroom did for us.

We could narrate a whole movie and reenact the clips that we could not manage when cramming formulas, and burning the night when regurgitating information for the next day's exam. I came to realize that every person you interact with leaves a print in your brain either positively or negatively. It is one's choice to choose how that memory will impact your current and future adaptation of that person.

One can call it a brouhaha to speak about positivity, but it is what you feed that brings forth the consequence. I had no idea why I loved animation, but it has come to light that it shows clearly to the young mind a picture of life like we know. The super hero will be big and strong and cheerful colours whereas the villain is most in dark colours and not easy to the eye. The brain operates in such a manner as well, because if you dwell too much on the rain hitting you, it will prevent you from observing what it does to your surroundings of growth, but instead see mud and dirt as well as its inconvenience.

Life is not always going to make sense and these are the moments at ground zero that can make or break one. When obstacles align themselves as if they are on a mission, endurance in those moments can only build the mental muscle. Counselling with awareness that mental health does not choose age, gender or even standing in society, so genuine awareness of the environment of the affected is crucial in getting a solution to the individual problem.

These have been some nuggets about life from my point of view, so do not get worked up because that is what they are. Perspectives of life from the lenses I wear and cards of the game of life that I have been dealt, hence the angle I deliver the points. It is me rambling and walking you through some thoughts of life of what I perceive it to be; so sit back and hopefully you enjoyed the show because it is framed from my observations. Instead of posting them on social media and just get some likes and dislikes, I thought why not rant on one white page and see where it ends up.

We are a cacophony of a lot of things, so the mind sieving through all this information and coming up with the authentic you are not an easy task. Our growing up, environment, connections add to all these experiences in life, all under one roof is quite a job description that the brain holds. Let's do this thing called life to the best of our individual, then collective abilities; as we learn about brain wellness. Let's Talk.

**THE
PRESENT**



We are living in a society that mental issues are taking over, due to the pressures of life. However, not many accept the facts at hand because of the stigma mental unwellness brings. Depression, stress, suicidal tendencies, anxiety, or madness as they like to call it, are on the rise.

This book is to remind us that all hope is not lost, to bring insight to the matters. It is a must read for those seeking to find out, help a life, and bring sanity to those who require mental wellness; as well as out of situations that have brought them to a dark place. It is written to the younger version of the author, by his adult self, based on his life experiences.

G A K U R U G I T H I N J I

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