

Growing Up

A NEWSLETTER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



Young People and Smoking

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Growing Up

Growing Up is published quarterly in Lagos by Action Health Incorporated (AHI). AHI is a non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to the promotion of adolescent health and development. We serve as an advocate and a catalyst for change in the present poor status of adolescents' well-being by increasing public awareness and implementing innovative education, health and youth development programmes.

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This edition of growing up is produced with support from:

The Mac Arthur Foundation,
Population Programme,
Chicago, Illinois

Printed by:
FINE PRINT LIMITED
Tel: 01-4979275

YOUNG PEOPLE

"Tobacco use in Africa is more than a health problem. It's a development problem too. Tobacco breeds poverty, killing people in their most productive years. It consumes family and health-care budgets. Also, money spent on tobacco products is money not spent on such essentials as education, food and medicine"

Dr. Ala Alwan, WHO Assistant-Director General for Non-communicable Diseases and Mental Health

"Fred and I are close friends, both of us are addicted to tobacco. We acknowledge our craving for this substance and recently, we have been getting help from a counseling centre not too far from home. Fred was introduced to smoking four years ago by his friends. He initially refused to take the stick, but later gave in after much pressure. Mine was a subtle tobacco journey. A friend gave me a brown substance and told me I didn't need to smoke it. He said all I need to do was slosh it around my mouth and spit out the brown juice every few seconds. I was disgusted at first, but I tried it. I loved the sensation it gave me. I did this for three years before I realised that I had become addicted to chewing tobacco, also known as smokeless tobacco."

Tobacco is an agricultural product processed from the leaves of plants in the genus *Nicotina*. The word *nicotina* (as well as *nicotine*) was named in honor of Jean Nicot, a French ambassador to Portugal, who in 1559 sent it as a medicine to the court of Catherine de Medici. It can be used as organic pesticides, and is also used in some medicines. In consumption, it most commonly appears in the forms of smoking, chewing, snuffing or dipping tobacco. Tobacco had long been used in America as an Entheogen before the arrival of the Europeans in North America; tobacco became quickly popularized as a trade item and as a recreational drug. The development of the cigarette was gingered by the change in demand and a change in the labor force, during the American civil war. Nicotine is both a stimulant and a depressant. That means it increases the heart rate at first and makes people feel more alert (like caffeine, and other stimulants). Then it causes depression and fatigue. The drug withdrawal from nicotine makes people crave another cigarette to perk up again. According to many experts, the nicotine in tobacco is as addictive as cocaine or heroin.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), tobacco use is one of the chief preventable causes of death. It attributes 5 million deaths to tobacco annually and by 2020, the figure is expected to exceed 10 million with approximately 70% of these deaths occurring in developing countries. In 1999, the Global Youth Tobacco Survey (GYTS) was initiated by the WHO, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA) to monitor tobacco use, attitudes about tobacco use, and exposure to second-hand smoke (SHS) among students aged 13-15 years. The GYTS covered five centres in Nigeria, including Abuja, Ibadan, Lagos, Kano and Cross River State in 2008.

The vast majority of smokers begin using tobacco products well before the age of 18 years. Statistics reveal that the use of any form of tobacco by 13-15 year old students is greater than 10%. In addition, almost one in four students (13-15 years old) who ever smoked cigarettes smoked their first cigarette before the age of 10. Recent studies have revealed that there is little difference between the genders in cigarette smoking or in the use of other tobacco products. It was predicted that if the pattern seen nowadays continued, a lifetime of tobacco use would result in the deaths of 250 million children and young people alive today, most of them in developing countries. There are various determinants of tobacco use among young people. These include cultural norms, availability of different types of tobacco products, tobacco industry behaviour to promote tobacco use and undercut tobacco control strategies, and, most importantly, the advertisement and marketing efforts of the tobacco industry which greatly influences adolescent smoking behaviour, et cetera.

AND SMOKING

By Peculiar Ediomu-Abasi



As part of its national tobacco control strategies, Nigeria has become a signatory to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) in June 2004 and ratified it in October 2005. In June 2006, the Honourable Minister of Health inaugurated a multi-sectoral/inter-sectoral committee on tobacco control in Nigeria. At the State level, the Cross River State Government had in 2001 passed a law prohibiting advertisement of tobacco products in the media while the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja) has placed a ban on public smoking since May 31, 2008. Recently, in 2008, a number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have come together to form an Anti Tobacco Control Alliance (ATCA). This advocacy group is now partners with the Government in its tobacco control efforts. Most of member organizations carry out activities especially during the World No Tobacco Day (WNTD) on May 31 each year to raise public awareness on the serious health, environmental and economic hazards posed by tobacco.

You may be involved in SECOND-HAND SMOKING!

You now know that smoking is a bad idea, but probably have not heard that breathing in someone else's second-hand smoke is also hazardous to your health. Second-hand smoke comes from both the smoke that smokers exhale (called mainstream smoke) and the smoke floating from the end of the cigarette, cigar, or pipe (called side-stream smoke).

It may seem pretty harmless, but second-hand smoke actually contains thousands of chemicals, many of which have been proven to be toxic or to cause cancer (called carcinogens). High concentrations of many of these chemicals are found in second-hand smoke. In fact, second-hand smoke significantly increases a person's risk for: respiratory infections (like bronchitis and pneumonia), asthma (second-hand smoke is a risk factor for the development of asthma and can trigger attacks in those who already have it), etc.

Why is smoking really said to be dangerous?

The real reason people smoke is to get nicotine which is highly addictive. The World Health Organization reports it to be the leading preventable cause of death worldwide and estimates that it currently causes 5.4 million deaths per year.

Cigarette smoke contains dangerous chemicals such as:

- Arsenic (rat poison)
- Ammonia (poisonous, in many household cleaners)
- Acetone (fingernail polish remover)
- Ammonium bromide (toilet cleaner)
- Benzene (industrial solvent)
- Carbon monoxide (exhaust pipe fumes)
- Cadmium (used in rechargeable batteries)
- Cyanide (poison used in gas chambers)
- DDT (insecticide)
- Formaldehyde (preservative for dead frogs, embalming fluid)
- Lead (a poison removed from nearly all paints)
- Mercury (highly poisonous and easily absorbed through respiration)
- Nickel (poisonous, a known cancer-causing agent)
- Hydrogen cyanide (deadly poison used in gas chambers)
- Hydrogen sulfide (sewer gas)
- Polonium-210 (radioactive substance)
- 50 + cancer causing agents (carcinogens) et cetera

Health effects of smoking among young people

- Among young people, health consequences of smoking include respiratory and non respiratory effects, addiction to nicotine, and the associated risk of other drug use, besides the high tendency of having a lower level of lung function than those persons who have never smoked.
- In adults, cigarette smoking causes heart disease and stroke. Studies have shown that early signs of these diseases can be found in adolescents who smoke.
- The resting heart rates of young adult smokers are two to three beats per minute faster than nonsmokers.
- Smoking at an early age increases the risk of lung cancer. For most smoking-related cancers, the risk rises as the individual continues to smoke.
- Teenage smokers suffer from shortness of breath almost three times as often as teens that don't smoke, and produce phlegm more than twice as often as teens who don't smoke.

Generally,

- Tobacco use is one of the main risk factors for a number of chronic diseases, including cancer, lung diseases, and cardiovascular diseases.
- Cancer is the second leading cause of death and was among the first diseases causally linked to smoking.
- Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death, and cigarette smoking causes most cases.
- For smoking-attributable cancers, the risk generally increases with the number of cigarettes smoked and the number of years of smoking, and generally decreases after quitting completely.
- The combination of smoking and alcohol consumption causes most laryngeal cancer cases. In 2003, an estimated 3800 deaths occurred from laryngeal cancer.
- In 2003, an estimated 57,400 new cases of bladder cancer were diagnosed and an estimated 12,500 died from the disease.



How to stop smoking

The first step to stop smoking is to understand why you must quit (saving oneself from the numerous effects of smoking), followed by the determination to be disciplined in the rigour involved in it. You have to prepare yourself mentally. Stay away from scenarios where you most enjoy your smoke such as bars, joints, clubs, and beaches. You need to realize that the craving, as strong as it is, only lasts 2-3 minutes. So, next time you crave one, occupy yourself- and the cravings will be gone. Make up your mind to be committed to the end.

Put it in writing. People who want to make a change often are more successful when they put it in writing. So write down all the reasons why you want to quit smoking, such as the money you will save or the stamina you'll gain for playing sports. Keep that list where you can see it, and add to it as you think of new reasons.

Get support. People whose friends and family help them quit are much more likely to succeed. If you don't want to tell your parents or family that you smoke, make sure your friends know, and consider confiding in a counselor or other adult(s) you trust.



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Inhalation Of Death

People say I was well brought up
That my parents showed me a good path to tread
Up until my teenage years, obedience was my
second name
And people were glad to be associated with a
success like me

However, as time passed, so did my innocence
All traces of focus and humility were soon gone
All that was left of me was a heart made of stone
To cap it up, I moved around with the worse teens

Needless to say, I ended up badly
Took the first inhalation of cigarette
And loved the feeling I got in my body
So, I continued filling my body with nicotine

I enjoyed the fact that I was recognized by the
toughest
Gradually, I could not do without ten sticks a day
I smoked at every available opportunity
I became a socially acceptable guy.

One fateful morning, I felt a pain in my chest.
Alas, at the hospital, I was diagnosed
With a yet to be determined disease
I can barely walk without taking a rest in between.

What would it have cost me to say 'NO'?
What have I gained from smoking and stealing?
I have only reaped the fruits of my seeds.
Smoking is really an inhalation of death.

Mervis Emelife (18 years old-Lagos)

Smiling and suffering

Why let your future fade away
Through what you can avoid?
The fear of smoking
Is the beginning of wisdom

Touch not, the folded paper
Filled with hay, its all poison
Light it up, its burns like pepper
Run from this death trap

For every smoke you drag
A quarter of a day is lost
What faster way to kill yourself
Than smoking a stick a day

Warnings to you innocent ones
Whose friends smoke by their side
Every second hand smoke you breathe
You become liable to cancer and stroke.

Adelola Rotimi (19 years old)

My Own Master

At last I quit the coffin nails,
Those dreaded cancer sticks.
I yield to them no longer.
I shall not require 'a fix', no more!
My master is not cigarettes,
It's really a dangerous affair

From now on it is me,
It is I who rule my life
And I will live in it smoke free!
As I kicked the habit.
My health is better
You too can quit the menace.

Tolu Amusan (24 years old)

Vanity upon vanity

I just want to have it
It can't be wrong
If it feels so right and good
Why not have it?

I would rather be thoughtful
So I don't do anything hurtful
That will make me eternally regretful
For the actions I took so little.

Don't start what is dangerous
Your health is more important
Than the poison, called cigarette
A word is enough for the wise.

The choices we make today
Come back to make or mar us
Be careful with the friends you keep
Your health is your wealth.

Helen Brown (Lagos)

Lethal Pleasure

I take my drag
off my lethal pleasure
As I wait upon the day
The lethal part kicks in

Drag after drag
I continue with the habit
The Pleasure kicks in
My addiction increases

So many like me
awaiting the day
This lethal addiction
will finally be overcome

Stress and despair are everywhere
Poverty stares us on the face
Smoking is my consolation
What a wrong choice to make.

Tolu Amusan (24 years old)

Cartoon

YOU'VE STARTED
SMOKING
ALREADY?

OH, YES, FIVE
STICKS A
DAY.



OH, MY GOODNESS!
SMOKING IS
DANGEROUS TO
YOUR HEALTH,
JOE.

RELAX, MY FRIEND,
NOTHING WILL
HAPPEN TO ME.



THAT'S WHAT
MY DADDY'S
FRIEND SAID
FIVE YEARS AGO
UNTIL HE GOT
INTO TROUBLE.

HOW?



AFTER MANY YEARS
OF SMOKING LIKE
A CHIMNEY, HE
WAS DIAGNOSED
WITH LUNG CANCER.





PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES TRAINED

A- 5 day training for 23 Public Health nurses from the School of Public Health, Ikoyi, Lagos was conducted by Action Health Incorporated (AHI) in October, 2009. The training which took place at the AHI Youth Friendly Centre focused on building their capacity in Human Sexuality and Adolescent Friendly Health Services as well as improving their comfort levels in discussing sexuality issues. It also aimed at promoting learning in the field of adolescent health and increase access to a youth friendly facility that responds to the needs of adolescents, youth service providers, researchers and health providers in Nigeria.

Various methodologies were employed in the training such as role plays, group discussion, question and answer, pre-test/ post test and energizers

Training sessions covered areas such as the **Introduction to Human Sexuality** which bordered on the dimensions and components of sexuality, sources of sexual learning, relevance of human sexuality to provision of health services, and how sexuality improves health services provision. Other areas included an *Overview of Adolescent Sexual Health in Nigeria; Sexuality across Life Span/Sources of Sexual Learning; Sexual Attitudes and Values Clarification; STIs and HIV/AIDS; Communicating About Sexuality; Principles of AYFHS/Facility/Providers' Characteristics; Client Flow Procedure/Follow-Up and Referrals including Home Visits; Clients' General/Psychosocial History Taking; Teenage Pregnancy/Pregnancy Options Counselling; Contraception; Breast and Testicular Self Examination; Sexual Orientation and Implication for Service Delivery; Assessing AYFHS: Data Collection Methods; Sexual Abuse and Finding Help.*

At the end of the training, participants had the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge acquired on AYFHS provision through practicum and consultation.



COVENANT UNIVERSITY STUDENTS VISIT AHI

AHI on November 18, 2009 played host to a team from the Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State. The team which was made up of five lecturers and 44 students at both 200 and 300 levels of the Demographic and Social Statistics program were on a learning visit aimed at equipping the young prospective demographers with possible knowledge of what demographic based research organizations are; see the networking of various arms of social and reproductive health research studies as well as the possible implementation of research findings especially from proposal to action plan processes.

The team was warmly received by AHI representatives and a tour round the facility enabled them have a better understanding of the various units of the organization.

An interactive session was held with the students and the young demographers were urged to avail themselves of the ability of understanding necessary statistical software packages relevant to the discipline as these would contribute effectively to their appreciating the course. They were later exposed to issues relating to monitoring and evaluation; another key area in which demographers could fit in.

At the end, the students thanked AHI for giving them the opportunity to learn more on the operations of the organization and were given various IEC materials.



PEER EDUCATORS AND HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS TRAINED IN OGUN AND AKWA IBOM STATES

Trainings on Peer Education/Life Skills as well as Youth Friendly Health Service Provision and Peer Education Programming were organized in November 2009. The overall goal of the project was to contribute to the reduction in the spread and mitigation of the impact of HIV infection among in and out of school youth in Nigeria. Participants for the peer education training comprised Youth Corps members and out-of school youths from faith-based/community-based organizations who would facilitate and coordinate peer education activities in both states. The participants for the YFHS and Peer Education Programming comprised staff of project implementing partners, officials of SACA and State Ministry of Health as well as Nurses from schools and the Public Health Care Facility.

In each state, the trainings were held simultaneously over a five-day period. The trainings were undertaken in Ogun and Akwa Ibom States back to back from 2nd -6th and 9th -13th November respectively. A total of 202 participants were trained as peer educators, while 49 NGO programmers including health providers were trained on youth friendly health service provision and peer education programming in the two states. The training for Ogun State was conducted at the Abeokuta Grammar School Hall, Abeokuta, while that of Akwa-Ibom State held at Kings and Queens Academy, Ewet Housing, Uyo, Akwa Ibom.

The training sessions for both peer educators and youth-friendly provider focused on the following thematic areas: Adolescent growth and development, adolescent sexual and reproductive health, communication and counseling, HIV and AIDS including Stigma and Discrimination as well as Care for Young people living with HIV and Peer Education Programming. Training methodologies were highly audience participatory and provided opportunities for experience sharing. The pre and post test recorded a significant increase in knowledge as well as positive change in attitude about adolescent sexual and reproductive health including HIV and AIDS. A brief but modest closing ceremony was held to mark the end of the training workshop.

Subsequently to the training in both states, the Youth Friendly Health Clinics provided to complement the project by increasing young people's access to non-judgmental responsive youth-friendly services were commissioned. The Youth-friendly clinic for Ogun State is situated at Oke-Ilewo Primary Health Care Center, Abeokuta, while that of Akwa Ibom is at St Luke's Specialist Hospital, Anua, Uyo. The commissioning of the Ogun Youth Friendly Clinic was done by the Supervisory Councilor for Health, Abeokuta South LGA, Alhaji Fasiu Ajadi. Other dignitaries present at the event included officials of the State Ministries of Health and Education, staff of Abeokuta South LGA, community leaders, peer educators and the youth-friendly health providers.



Peer Educators during the training



Alhaji Ajadi, Commissioning the Youth Friendly Clinic



Dr. Odiakosa addressing guests at the commissioning ceremony



Group discussions during the training

LEAP AFRICA REWARDS EXCELLENCE

The Shell Hall, MUSON Centre, Lagos was filled to capacity on Thursday, November 19, 2009 as youth and adults alike trooped in to witness the '6th Annual Nigerian Youth Leadership Awards' organized by LEAPAFRICA.

The event aimed at rewarding young people in Nigeria who have initiated change projects that are focused on improving the lives of others; encourage and support these young people in their efforts as well as showcase their impact on local communities and demonstrate that the youth can effectively serve as change leaders in Nigeria.

The colourful event witnessed a large turn out of dignitaries from all walks of life including the Central Bank of Nigeria Governor, Mr. Lamido Sanusi, Mr. Sesan Awoniki, CEO Premier Computer Support, representatives of NGOs, the media, teachers and the academia.

Highlight of the programme was the introduction of 2009 Awardees and presentation of Awards and Certificates to 10 deserving winners.

Aboderin Tunde (30). He is a graduate of the National Film Institute, Jos. His passion for social change through film inspired him to initiate Mobile Cinema Crew, social entrepreneurship initiative that utilizes graphics, video, print, and photography as a means to develop the artistic and critical literacy and career skills of young people.

Adesokan Balkiss (27). She is a graduate of Industrial and Labour Relations from Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State. She initiated Brand It Nigeria in 2006 which aimed at promoting patriotism among Nigerian youth.

Yejide Alo (29). She is a graduate of Urban and Regional Planning from Obafemi Awolowo University and the founder of Young Minds Empowerment Initiative (YMEI), a project she was motivated to implement during her National Youth Service in 2006.

Anyaegbu Francis (24). He is a graduate of Science Laboratory Technology, Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro. He initiated in 2005, the Youth In Transit Organization (YITO), an initiative which is focused on educating and empowering youth to make the transition from passive observers to community and global leaders.

Inalegwu Frank (29). He initiated the Society for Life and Human Development which is committed to the economic empowerment of PLWHA and vulnerable groups.

Isikwenu Oghenefego (26). She is a graduate of Biochemistry from Delta State University. She established Inspiro Communications and Media (ICM) in 2004 to address the challenges faced by youth in her community.

Odiase Emmanuel (26). Emmanuel is an anti-tobacco advocate who is passionate about educating youth on the health implications of tobacco smoking. He initiated the Smoke Free Foundation in 2007 and has been carrying out Anti-tobacco campaigns in Iperu.

Okafor Peter (28). Peter is a graduate of Accounting from Federal Polytechnic, Oko whose concern about the growing unemployment statistics in Nigeria propelled him to initiate Operation Be Your Own Boss in 2005.

Okelola Olumayokun (25). He is a graduate of Physics from the Federal University of Technology, Minna and a Founder of G54 Environmental Project Group, an initiative focused on creating awareness on the impact of environmental pollution in Niger State.

Rotimi Akin (28). He is a graduate of Geography from the University of Ibadan who co-founded the African Youth Unite for Change (AFYUCh), an initiative with a vision to build leadership and conflict resolution potential among young people in Post-War African countries.



LSACA COMMEMORATES THE WORLD AIDS DAY

It was pomp and colour at the Adeyemi-Bero Auditorium, Alausa, Ikeja, venue of the World AIDS Day commemoration organized by The Lagos State AIDS Control Agency (LSACA) on December 1, 2009.

The event witnessed a large turn out of participants. Representatives of various NGOs, CBOs, students and teachers, trade unions, Chairpersons of various Local Government Areas of Lagos, Lagos State Government officials, nurses and the media were not left out in the event.

In his welcome address, Dr. Olusegun Ogboye, who represented the CEO, LSACA, Dr. (Mrs) F.A Dabiri said that without human rights, there will be no universal access. He reiterated the need to get tested and know your status.

In his lecture titled, "Stigma as a Barrier to HIV/AIDS Prevention", he defined stigma as a powerful and negative social label that radically and negatively affects the way individuals view themselves and the way others view those individuals as persons based on prejudiced position. He listed some of the causes of stigma to include insufficient knowledge, wrong beliefs and fears about how HIV is transmitted, judgmental attitude that perceives People Living with HIV and AIDS as being promiscuous among others and therefore, called on all and sundry to stop stigma and discrimination.

Other highlights of the event were a drama presentation, an exhibition by stakeholders in the fight against HIV/AIDS, HIV Counseling and Testing and the official launching of the book, "Law For The Protection of People Living with HIV and AIDS", by the Special Guest of Honour, Mr. Olasupo Shasore (SAN), Honourable Commissioner/Attorney- General, Lagos State Ministry of Justice. He re-iterated the commitment of Lagos State Government towards protecting the sanctity of every human being stressing that stigma and discrimination of PLWHA will not be tolerated. He informed those present that Lagos State gives Free Legal Counseling/Advice to those whose rights have been violated and called on them to avail themselves of the opportunity in order to stop stigma and discrimination in the State. He formally introduced the document that has become a law guiding the protection of PLWHA in Lagos State.

In a related development, Action Health Incorporated (AHI) joined the rest of the world to mark the World AIDS Day at the Youth Centre on December 1, 2009. With "Universal Access and Human Rights" as its theme, the event featured various lectures, a quiz competition, riddles and jokes as well as song renditions by young people. More than 100 young people took part in the event.



THE TEENAGE FESTIVAL OF LIFE (TFL) 2009

'Young people and The Millennium Development Goals: Creating Opportunities for Involvement'

"What could be attracting this horde of young people on a Saturday?" It was quite unusual. Most surprising, was the realization that they were secondary school students. Excitement was in the air as they hurriedly tramped into the Main Auditorium of the University of Lagos to witness another edition of the "Teenage Festival of Life 2009" with the theme, *"Young People and The Millennium Development Goals: Creating Opportunities for Involvement"*.

The highly appreciated "Teenage Festival of Life" became a reality in 1993. It has since then been a platform for young people to realize, express, and develop their maximum potentials. The festival has afforded young people the opportunity for a free positive self-expression and a display of unique talents and potentials in drama, music, poetry and artwork. During the TFL, young people have an avenue to air their opinion on issues such as drug abuse, premature sexual activity, teenage pregnancy, peer pressure, cultism and Sexually Transmitted Infections including HIV, as well as suggest a way forward from their own perspective. TFL was conceived as part of the efforts to fulfill the vision of Action Health Incorporated, a non-governmental organization, dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of adolescents in Nigeria.

The intense preparation prior to the d-day, November 14, 2009 was laudable. The preparation kicked off early in the year to ensure the success of the event. It featured young people "doing their own thing" with support from adults. A TFL planning committee was set up, comprising young people and experienced adults; to discuss, plan and coordinate all preparatory activities leading to the festival. Publicity for the event was done through the quarterly newsletter, placing of posters at strategic places, verbal communication, and sharing of handbills. As part of the preparations for the event, a two-day training workshop on script development and stage presentation was held to enhance the quality of entries submitted by participating schools. The workshop also provided an avenue to enlighten schools on the rules and regulations of the festival. A seasoned artistic consultant conducted the workshop along with facilitators in the different artistic genres.

Young people from 47 secondary schools in Lagos state submitted entries for the competition. The assessment and short-listing of scripts was conducted by a team of experts in the creative arts. The selection criteria used included: structure style, format, diction/language, plot, character realization, time/setting, title and theme realization. A total of 16 drama scripts, 10 song entries, and 21 poetry scripts were evaluated. These selected entries were presented to a panel of judges, made up of professional writers and dramatist as well as young people at a two-day prejudging event. The best three entries were selected at the prejudging event, and the students had to be groomed, in order to ensure high quality stage performance on the festival day. The grooming process was facilitated by a theatre Arts consultant and respected stage Director, Mr. Lookman Sanusi.

Countdown to TFL was not many hours, and the next was the long awaited day November 14th, 2009; the Saturday that left a mark in the hearts of both the young and old who filled the auditorium to a capacity of 1,500 people. The Master of Ceremony, Mr. Dayo Adeneye of Primetime Jamz conducted the programme alongside six teenagers whom he had groomed over a period of time as comperes. Notable personalities in attendance included high level officials from the Lagos State Ministry of Education, Community Development Association members from Somolu, Kosofe and Mainland Local government, parents, representatives of NGOs and the media.

The welcome address was presented by Mrs. Adenike Esiet, the Executive Director of Action Health Incorporated. In her address, she summarized three issues that are imperative in the lives of young people, that the millennium goal addresses: (1) access to education, because of its potential for lifting young people all over the world from the dungeons and traps of poverty, (2) access to sexual and reproductive health information and services to protect young people and help them make informed decisions about their lives; and (3) changing gender norms that affect young people from getting into situations that will deprive them of achieving their life's goal.

After the welcome address was a power-point presentation on the TFL process presented by Miss Tolu Amusan, who explained the different stages of preparation for the event. The representative of the Ministry of Education, Mrs. M. K Hazoume, who is the officer-in-charge of the Family Life and HIV Education Curriculum implementation in Lagos State, mentioned the role of Action Health Inc. who had worked with the Ministry to ensure that young people in Lagos State are taught in the three learning domains of education: the cognitive, affective and psycho-motor areas of learning. She encouraged parents to help the young people showcase their talents, knowing they are the future of the nation.



Drama presentation by students of Ikosi Grammar School, Ketu, Lagos

Finally was the anticipated moment for the schools to make their well rehearsed presentations. In the song category, Ikosi Senior High School presented a song, titled, "**Hope**", Toyibat Comprehensive High School, Gbagada, advised us to '**Achieve Paradise**', Comprehensive High School, '**A better place**'. For the drama category, Ikosi Senior High School acted a drama on '**The Resolution**', Apostolic Church Senior Grammar School, Ketu, '**To Me, To You**', Girls Junior High School Agege, '**Victory of the Victims**'. For the poetry category, Gbagada Senior High School, Bariga recited a poem titled '**Heart in Pain**', St. Luke's Grammar School, Bariga, '**The Value of Me**', and Ajayi Crowther Senior School, Bariga, '**The Battle for Development**'.

The motivational talk segment was unique. It was very interactive as Chief Dayo Adeneye gave the young people opportunities to ask him questions about his life. They asked about his career; what his growing up was like and if he ever experienced poverty. They requested to know how he differentiates his passion from his desire to be rich and how they could be like him. Uncle D1 was generous with his answers. In summary, he encouraged the young people to obtain a good education after which they could pursue a career where their passion lies. He left the young people with a final word "wherever you find yourselves in the next twenty years, learn to give back to the society, while being a part of those that change the society'.

"**Am Hotter Than Fire**" rented the air as the popular artist "**Sheyman**" stepped on stage. Next was "**Baraje**" by the re-known music artist "**Rugged man**". They both thrilled the audience with their artistry as the audience called for more. In between performances, they encouraged the young people to aspire for a good education and to achieve success.

When the excitement calmed, it was then time to acknowledge the winners. Schools in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd positions in the three categories were awarded trophies, while those in the 4th, 5th, 6th positions were awarded plaques. The supervising teachers were awarded gift items. Individuals who were outstanding in their performances were not left out. Opetie Ebibote from The Apostolic Church Grammar School, Ketu and Ajose Nurudeen from The Ikosi Senior High School, Ketu received awards for their outstanding performances in the drama category. Adeshina Lawal from Toyibat comprehensive High School, Gbagada and Eburnola Fumilayo from the Ikosi Senior High School, Ketu received an award for their angelic delivery of songs. Victor Nwabuoka from Ajayi Crowther Senior School, Bariga and Chidera Okani from St. Luke's Grammar School got rewarded for their poetic competence.



Young Comperes at the event



Motivational Session by Chief Dayo Adeneye



'Sheyman' entertaining the audience



A cross section of dignitaries at the festival

Ikosi Senior high School, Apostolic Church Grammar School, Girls Junior Grammar School (Agege), came 1st, 2nd and 3rd respectively in the drama category. For the creativity in the song category, Alapere Comprehensive High School, Ikosi Senior High School and Toyibat Comprehensive High School came 1st, 2nd and 3rd. For their competence in poetry, Ajayi Crowther Senior High School, grasped the first position while St. Luke's Grammar School and Gbagada Senior Grammar School were 2nd and 3rd respectively.

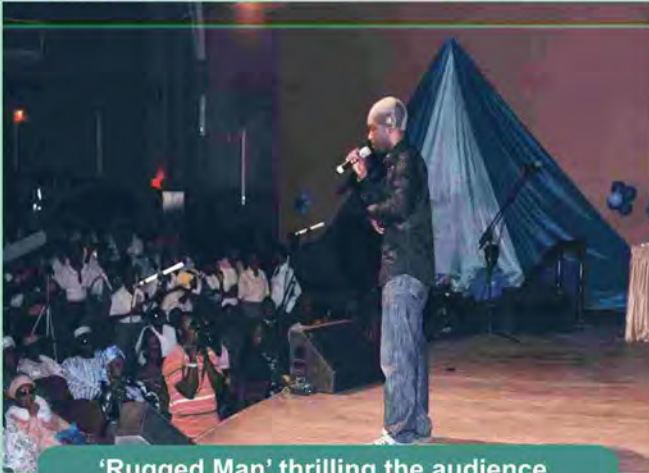
The 16th edition of the Teenage Festival of Life ended in a grand style, just like it had promised from the very beginning. The objectives were achieved as there was increased awareness on the roles of and actions by young people in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).



Toyibat Comprehensive High School, Gbagada, Lagos rendering the song 'Achieve Paradise'



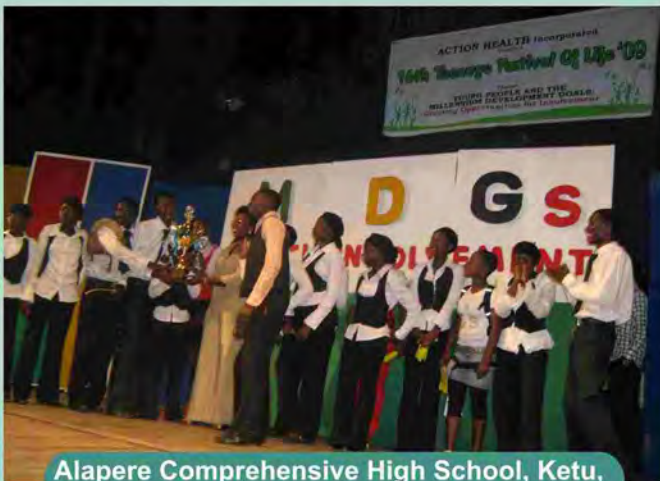
A drama presentation by Apostolic Grammar School, Ketu



'Rugged Man' thrilling the audience



A song presentation by students of Ikosi Grammar School, Ketu, Lagos.



Alapere Comprehensive High School, Ketu, Lagos, receiving their trophy in the 'song category'



Participants registering at the festival



A cross section of young people at the festival



Mrs. M. K. Hazoume in a group photograph with some of the winners

Dear Diary



Sunday

I felt so excited getting out of bed this morning because my aunty was dedicating her first son in the church. After the religious activities, we moved to their posh apartment at Ajah for a swooping and watering dinner reception. All hands were on deck making sure that the event went smoothly without one lacking anything. I had to volunteer to direct guests to their seats. Lo and behold, I saw him coming, so handsome; his eyes were like a pair of shimmering diamond perfectly flitted across his nasal cavity. I was lost just staring at the façade of matchless poise, but I managed to maintain my balance as I directed him to a seat.

Not too long, we got talking and I was impressed at the level of intelligence he exhibited during the short time of interaction. We talked about school, social and general issues. What thrilled me was a research work he was embarking on. It was about the Millennium Development Goals; how to reduce child mortality and improve maternal health. As he reeled out his intentions, it was obvious he was no starry-eyed sixteen year old boy, he was more than that. We exchanged phone numbers as the party ended. Throughout the night, I kept brainstorming on how to also be involved and decided to talk with Khadijat the PTA chairman's daughter as

Monday

The gentle rays of sunlight flicking through the window blinds woke me up and the day's reality dawned on me. A flashback to the dream I had, teased the embers of new feeling of relevance. I saw myself on a platform receiving an award for my philanthropic commitment to community projects that catered for the poor. New resolution welled up within me. After the euphoria had worn off, I got out of bed though tired as a result of the party, to prepare for school. During break, I asked after Khadijat but was told she was not in school. I told Amarachi about him and my dream with an immeasurable outpour of affection. She could not see the determination I expressed about working on myself academically, socially and to create access to timely information. Back home, I glued myself to the TV and was touched by the stories in the news. My thought lingered on what to do in my own capacity to attain the millennium development goals, not knowing that something was about to happen.

Tuesday

It was a rude shock this morning when the principal announced the demise of one of the teachers, the PTA chairman. He was sick for weeks; I remembered the principal leading us in series of prayers for his recovery but it persisted. He was later confirmed to be HIV positive. I could easily figure out why Khadijat was not in school. A moment's silence was observed in honour of him. All through the day, everyone talked in low tones and anyone could tell that sobriety was in the air. I told mum and she educated me on HIV/AIDS; the dangers and how to care for PLWHA. She emphasized on not stigmatizing against people living with HIV/AIDS.

Wednesday

The atmosphere was a bit lighter as students chatted and giggled in their classes. At break time, I saw Khadijat at a distance and I ran after her. She was by the school clinic crying and on seeing me, she snapped at me to go away. I went closer and assured her of my support and confidentiality no matter what the problem was, and then she relaxed. She told me about the remarks and gestures she got from her classmates. She was erroneously being avoided for fear of contracting HIV. It was really devastating being stigmatized for no fault of yours as I recalled the discussion I had with my mum. I consoled and cheered her up. I politely encouraged her to know her HIV status by going for a test, so we agreed to see the school nurse next day.

I received a call from him and he informed me about the progress of his research. I was happy for him.

Thursday

At break, Khadijat was already waiting for me outside my class. Some students poked their nose at her as they passed but she was not bothered; at least someone like me was still friendly to her. Amarachi saw us together and was reluctant to join us but I persuaded her. The nurse, a beautiful and friendly woman received us and expressed her condolence to Khadijat, this made her more relaxed. We told the nurse of our intention and she was pleased to be of help. She asked us to come the next morning for the test so she can contact the necessary authorities and make the materials available. She applauded Amarachi and I for supporting Khadijat. We went to Khadijat's class where we educated them on HIV/AIDS. Some were listening while others felt unconcerned. I was engrossed in this advocacy unknown that the Vice Principal was by the door watching.

Friday

We waited anxiously for Khadijat's test. The nurse called her in while we waited in silent prayers. Moments later, they both came out smiling as Khadijat ran into my curious embrace. No prophet was needed to tell me that the test result was favorable. As we celebrated, the school bell rang and we ran along rejoicing. I sensed that the assembly was different because some dignitaries were seated with the principal, including Khadijat's mother. To my surprise, I was called to the platform to talk to the students about HIV/AIDS. I did with passion using the opportunity to announce Khadijat's HIV/AIDS status. I received a standing ovation and recognition from one of the dignitaries who I later found out to was the Asst Regional Co-ordinator for the Millennium Development Goals' project in the region. Later, I was invited to the Principal's office where I got a special invitation to attend a youth summit on MDGs scheduled for the next day. Mum was proud of me.

Saturday

I was radiating all over in preparation for the summit as my parents decided to go with me. The auditorium was massively decorated. We were ushered to a special table. Speeches were made and in the course of the event, I was specially awarded an honorary certificate for my campaign against stigma and discrimination. When the time came for the participants to present their research papers; something happened. I got the shock of my life.....

BODY AWARENESS

Alcohol – You and Your Body

Alcohol is a type of a drug that slows down the central nervous system. Drinking has the potential to make people feel sick, anxious and even aggressive.

There are three main parts of the brain that become affected when drinking alcohol – the extent to which these parts are affected will ultimately depend on how much alcohol you are consuming.

For example:

Cerebrum – controls functions like reasoning, emotions, vision and recognition. After one or two drinks, inhibitions are lowered and judgment may be affected. As more alcohol is drunk, vision and speech may become impaired.

Cerebellum – controls coordination of movements. After a few more drinks balance and reflexes will be affected. People may experience confusion and memory blackouts are a possibility.

Medulla – controls survival functions such as breathing and heartbeat. If so much alcohol has been drunk that it reaches the medulla, the brain loses its ability to control breathing and the heart rate drops. This can result in death.

Also, have you ever wondered why people get a hangover after drinking alcohol – it is due to the brain being deprived of water and glucose, which is the brain's food.

Apart from the physical affects of drinking alcohol, there are other negative consequences associated with alcohol. For example, you can also become more susceptible to dangers, such as risk of injury, verbal or physical abuse and unsafe or unwanted sex.

Body Effects

The kind of alcohol we drink is called ethanol. When people have any alcoholic drink they consume quantities of ethanol. Ethanol is a by-product of the fermentation process (when yeast and sugar are mixed together and react). Ethanol dissolves easily in water, so it can be rapidly absorbed from the digestive tract and circulate throughout the body in the blood.

Alcohol in the body

Human bodies regard ethanol as a poison, and have many mechanisms to try to deal with it and render it harmless. After stimulating the taste buds in the mouth, most of the ethanol goes into the stomach.

Alcohol Poisoning

Alcohol poisoning (when parts of your brain shut down because there is too much alcohol in the blood system) can make a person very sick, and can even be fatal.

High tolerance?

Some people find that they can drink relatively large amounts of alcohol without seeming to be drunk. This is dangerous. It could mean that they have been drinking so much that they are developing a tolerance to levels of alcohol that would have left them drunk in the past. As they drink more to experience the same level of effects, they are exposed to more and more alcohol-related harm.

Hangovers

We've all heard of the hangover but what is it? Symptoms include a pounding headache, feeling sick or depressed, general grouchiness and diarrhoea. Aside from the alcohol, drinks have small amounts of additives (congeners) give drinks their colour, flavour and smell. Congeners affect everyone differently and may contribute to you feeling ill.

The pounding headache is caused by dehydration. Alcohol's toxicity can cause acids to accumulate in the stomach and intestines resulting in queasiness and nausea. The stomach lining becomes inflamed (gastritis) delaying digestion.

Alcohol can inflame the oesophagus, the tube that carries food from the throat to the stomach, giving you heartburn.

When you drink, you take in large quantities of increased glucose. The Pancreas responds to this by producing more insulin, which removes the glucose. Once the process has started, the insulin carries on working removing glucose from the blood. Low blood glucose levels are responsible for the shakes, excess sweating, dizziness, blurred vision and tiredness.

Alcohol often affects bowel movements, in the normal course, the small and large intestines reabsorb salt and water, but alcohol interferes with this process often causing diarrhoea.

The only true cure for a hangover is time, however there are some things you can do to lessen your discomfort. Drink plenty of water, nourish your body with food, toast and fruit at breakfast. Consume food with some sugar, alcohol has broken down the liver's sugar stores, these need replaced. Get plenty of rest and sleep.

Dehydration

Alcohol is diuretic. This means it encourages the body to lose more water than it takes on by halting the production of the body's anti-diuretic hormone, resulting in you needing to go to the toilet excessively and so speeding up the loss of fluid from your body, leading to dehydration.

Alcohol also attacks our stores of vitamins and minerals, which need to be in the correct balance for the body to function normally. Dehydration caused by drinking can affect the balance by draining potassium from the body, resulting in thirst, muscle cramps, dizziness and faintness.

Long Term Risks

Over time dependence on alcohol can become both physical and psychological. Physical dependence happens when your body becomes so used to coping with alcohol in its system that it suffers withdrawal when you are not drinking. Psychological dependence is when you crave to drink alcohol or an inability to limit your drinking on any given occasion.

References:

www.health.vic.gov.au/drugs/alcohol/body
www.alac.org.nz/bodyeffects.aspx

COMMUNICATION ETHICS

Communication is a core part of our everyday life, talking about conveying information in friendship, family, business and other forms of relationships. In this edition, we would talk about those ethics that should be observed while communicating with people in various places.

Communication involves exchanging ideas, listening, understanding and expressing oneself, it also involves the use of body language and facial expression to convey messages. There are certain things one should have on mind while conveying information or messages. One should remember that communication could either be in a verbal or non verbal form.

- Having a good knowledge on the information being conveyed: one should have important facts related to the issue of conversation. It could be through reading and research.
- Speaking out loud: It's always good to speak out loud so the other person would hear you and not get misconceptions which can be very risky.
- Clear pronunciation of words: your words should be prominently said for clear understanding.
- Using the appropriate words for the appropriate places: we should use the words that are suitable for the kind of places we may find ourselves.
- Your self esteem affects your mode of communication, therefore for effective communication; one should have a high self esteem. When one is bold there'll be clear eye to eye contact which is very necessary for an effective communication.
- Using the correct body language that goes in line with your words matters a lot in communication. Your body language should relate your words for proper perception.
- Always remember let your "YES be YES" and your "No be No"
- Go straight to the point: Don't always beat around the bush, just convey the message, otherwise your listener will lose concentration and not get the information at the end of the day.
- Always state your feelings clearly and honestly.
- Be Assertive: Remember it is polite to express yourself when the need arises but in a way that you won't hurt the other party.
- Always use the "I" statement when speaking for yourself.
- Always consider people's values when communicating. Just as you have your own values and want those to be respected so does every other person, so put respecting other people's value into consideration when communicating.
- Try not to be biased when communicating especially with issues related to gender and gender roles.

Listening is also a core part of communication. Therefore:

- Learn to listen to the other party without interrupting. Let them speak their minds, don't interfere while they speak.
- Trying to understand the other party's point of view is also necessary when communicating.

- Listen to the other party without thinking of what to say next
- Rephrase what the other party is saying to ensure clear and effective understanding.
- Ensure that the other party knows that you are listening by using simple body languages to notify such as nodding and a host of others.
- Always clarify what the other party has said to avoid misconception while communicating.
- Try not to change the subject matter; speakers tend to feel offended when trying to pass a message and another subject matter is raised.
- Be patient with the other party when information is being conveyed in order to get every single detail.
- Do not put the other party down or make the person speaking feel inferior or else it would affect his/her attitude thereby affecting the information being passed.

Effective communication enhances good interpersonal relationship between people; it brings about understanding which evades unnecessary conflict, respect for one another and promotion of one's self image.

Phone Etiquette

Ensure the number you have is correct. If you do disturb someone and it's the wrong number then 'please' have the decency to say, "I'm so sorry! I have the wrong number". That individual may be ill, in a wheelchair, or elderly, etc, so you should respect and apologize for the inconvenience.

Check your voice! It carries much more than just a tone, and reflects your character and personality even on the phone! Remember: your listener cannot see you, so your phone-voice becomes your facial expressions, gestures, personality and character. Always check your voice when speaking; speak in a pleasant tone and very clearly. **Smile** through your voice! What they hear will make a positive or negative impression.

When someone answers the phone don't be harsh and abrupt by telling them what you want first. This confuses them and makes them wonder who you are. You also appear very rude, which is bad if you need a favour from them. It gives the wrong impression before you start! And don't say, "Who is this?" You phoned them, so **introduce yourself** and state who you are and what you want – politely! For example; say "Hello, my name is Mrs. Peppermint, I'd like to speak to Mrs. Sally Lemon. Is she available?" Or if you are making inquiries, state; "Hello, this is Mrs. Peppermint, I saw an advert in the local paper for a shop assistant; is that position still open?" When finished, say, "Thank you for your help. Goodbye" and be genuine! Now **ensure** you give them time to say 'Goodbye' too!

Give people a chance to answer their phone! They could be outside in their garden, knitting, baking, washing the car or at another end of the house. Don't just ring three times and hang up! It's annoying when you stopped doing something, go into the lounge to answer and just as it gets to your ear the caller hangs up!

Dear Aunty

Is it true that romance leads to sexual intercourse?

Romance triggers pleasurable feelings that may make one engage in sexual intercourse. However, with self control and determination not to have sex, one may not engage in sexual intercourse. Sometimes adolescents find it difficult to exercise self control and determination, so it is better to avoid extreme intimacy.

What should I do if I have a vaginal discharge?

Virginal secretion is an evidence of normal functioning of the female reproductive organs. The secretion could become abnormal if it has an offensive odour or if the colour is yellow or brown or green. This could be due to an infection, poor personal and menstrual hygiene, and irritation of the vaginal following the use of irritants like medicated soap to wash the vaginal. If these symptoms exist or if you are not sure, you must see your doctor for examination, treatment and counseling.

Is it compulsory for a girl to inform her parents about the reaching of menarche?

There is no rule that says one must inform ones parents when one experiences the first menstruation, but the young person would need money to buy things that she would need to keep her body clean when menstruating, so it is ideal for her to tell her parents about it so that she can be given the money she needs. Apart from the above reasons, menstruation is an important land mark of growth and development milestone of a female human being. The commencement of menstruation signifies that the young girl has reached a period of reproductive capability. Many young people are naïve about it, and it is only when the parents are informed that the young girl can be provided with the right information on personal hygiene, menstrual hygiene and ways of preventing unwanted pregnancy. Etc.

What do you do to relieve menstrual pains?

Try the following:

- Accept that it is a normal thing and it's just for a few days.
- Study and keep record of your menstrual cycle so that you can differentiate the menstrual pain from other causes.
- Try the use of hot water bottle on the lower abdomen or use water to compress with towel.
- Do mild pelvic exercise to reduce or relieve the pain.
- Use mild analgesics like paracetamol, indocid or feldene but it must not be taken on an empty stomach; it must be taken after or before meals.

My vaginal has an unusual odour. Is it normal? What could be the cause?

Vaginal odour can be caused by several factors. The most common cause is vaginal bacterial growth known as vaginal vaginosis. Vaginal odor can be caused by excessive sweating because it also promotes a wet environment. A physical examination by a health provider can determine whether or not the odor is being caused by something that is treatable with a medication. The physical examination can also detect other health problems that might cause the unusual odor. If you have any odor in your genital area, you should visit a health provider.

For some time now my uncle has been making sexual advances towards me. I am quite confused and don't know what to do?

Sexual harassment or sexual abuse is never right. The first thing you have to remember is that your uncle has no right whatsoever to harass you, and you are not to blame. You could also document what happens. Write down specific dates, times, places, kinds of incidents, your responses, his answers and any witnesses. It is also important that you generate support for yourself before you take action. You have to break the silence and talk to a trusted adult who would be able to take prompt action. Your parents may be a good resort to turn to. However, if you do not feel comfortable talking to your parents about it, you could talk to a close trusted adult family member. Collective action and joint complaints strengthen your position. It is very important that you let the harasser know as clearly, directly and explicitly as possible that you are not interested in his attentions. If you cannot do this verbally, you could do it in writing, ensure that you keep a copy of letter. If you don't take action, your uncle may rape you or do something that would hurt you.

I am 21 years old and never menstruated. What should I do?

Amenorrhea (absence of menstrual period) is the condition of never having a period at the time menstruation usually starts (between the ages of 11 and 18), secondary amenorrhea is the cessation of menstruation after at least one period. Some causes are dieting, starving, heavy athletic training, especially during early adolescence, use of certain drugs, a congenital defect of the genital tract, hormone imbalance, cysts or tumors, diseases, chromosomal abnormalities, stress or emotional factors. As a remedy for lack of periods, ensure that you visit the doctor who can detect if there are any problems, and provide the appropriate remedy. It is important that you see a doctor as soon as possible to find out the reason why you have not menstruated at the age of 21.

I am 16 years and I usually menstruate twice in a month. Is my circle normal?

The length of the menstrual cycle usually varies from twenty to thirty six days, the average being twenty eight days. Some women (girls) have alternating long and short cycles. There can be spontaneous small changes and there can be major ones when a woman (girl) is under a great deal of stress. An average period can last two to eight days or four to six days. A good way to start learning about your cycle and what is usually normal is by keeping a simple chart. Note the start and end of your flow on a calendar each month. A cycle is completed from the last day of your period to the first day of another menstrual flow. Once you count the number of days between each cycle for about six months you will know whether you have a regular 28 day cycle or otherwise. If you notice a significant change from the normal cycle days over a period of time, (about 2-3 months) you should see your doctor. However, it is possible for one to complete one cycle and start another in the same month, provided the normal range of days within your menstrual cycle is completed.

True Life Story

What a Life!

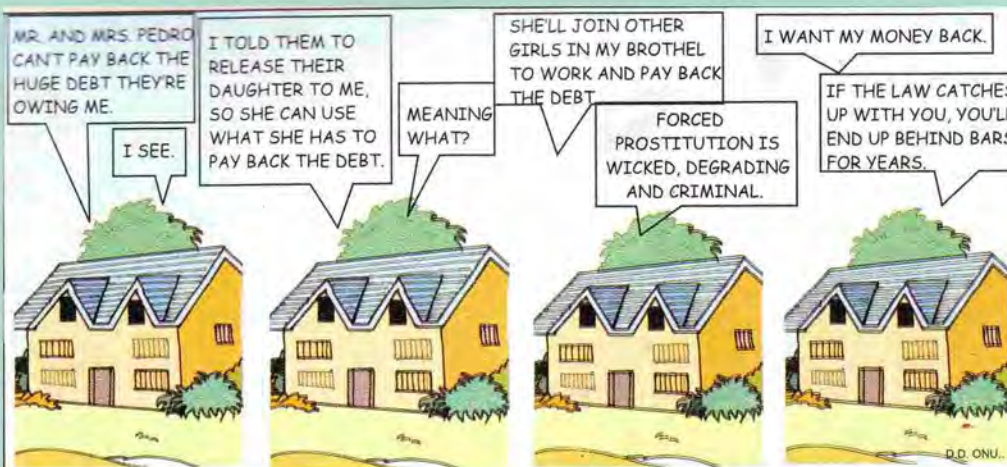
Why was I ever born in this part of the world? Why couldn't I be born somewhere else where life is well organized and health care and social services are readily available to the people? Why couldn't I just be allowed to choose who my parents? What is the meaning of life? Why is there so much suffering? What purpose is there in it all? Where am I going? What is in my future? What do I have to look forward to? I have asked myself these questions many times and I kept asking them because I never seemed to be able to find any answers... well, none that really hit home anyway. But I'm getting ahead of myself here. Let me tell you a little bit about where I've been first. Then I'd like to share with you who I am and what is in my future. And thank you for taking the time to read my story.

I was born into a society that places little value on the girl child. I am the oldest of three girls that my mother and father had. My parents weren't exactly rich but they did all they could to make ends meet. I don't remember very much about my father, he wasn't home for the most part. He worked out of town and had a weakness for women that kept him pretty busy. My mother was just 32 and I was eight when he died in an accident. My two sisters were seven and four. We cried when mum told us, but I think it was more because she was crying....we hardly knew our dad. As if that was not enough, my mum fell sick and my aunty said she had "iba" (malaria), an easily preventable illness, but because we could not afford to go to the hospital for proper treatment, before long, she also passed away leaving me with my two siblings. Life became very difficult as my parents didn't have any savings that we could fall back on. My aunty who was my mother's immediate sister took us in and made us more like house helps. We were treated like trash and were made to feel as if she was doing us a huge favour. We were not allowed to go to school because we were girls and according to my aunty, sending us to school was a complete waste of time and resources.

I couldn't take it any longer and I had to run away leaving her with my sisters. My major goal was to go out there and try to make a living so as to get my siblings out of our aunty's claws. Little did I know of what was ahead. Life

on the street was rather hostile and harsh. I didn't have any money so I got caught up in prostitution and smoking. That was the only way I could survive on my own. I was innocent and naïve and I didn't know anything about contraceptives or HIV. The long term consequence of my smoking was also alien to me. In short, I was totally clueless. I cannot count how many men that slept with me but I know that most of them treated me badly and used me as if I was an object to be used at will. I was greatly traumatized but I couldn't help it because I was already stuck. I became pregnant so many times and my friends advised me to terminate them all.

One Saturday morning, Pam (my friend) and I were invited by one of our numerous clients to one hotel and we were in one of the bars drinking, smoking and having a ball while we waited for our clients to show up. Not quite long, we saw two well dressed women enter the bar and walked towards our table, they spoke to us nicely and gave us a packet of female condoms each. I have never seen and used a female condom before but they took their time to explain how it works. Before they left, they invited us for a program in their organization and my friend and I promised to attend. During the program, we found out that the organization is actually an NGO that focuses on the welfare of young people. We were encouraged to go for counseling and afterwards, I was advised to do a voluntary HIV test because of the kind of life style I was living. I was so scared of the result because most of my sexual escapades were without protection. I did the test anyway and I tested positive. I was aghast. The counselors at the NGO were very helpful and understanding though. They told me that it is not the end of the world and that I could still live a normal and productive live. Not quite long, I began having serious bouts of cough and pains in my chest. I went to the clinic and I was told that I had developed an ENT (ear, nose and throat) infection as a result of my constant and addictive smoking habit. I was devastated. If only my parents had not died and left me and my siblings in dire need and poverty! What a life. I'm afraid to even go back to my aunty's house to see my siblings. I'm confused. I don't know what to do.



FORCED PROSTITUTION: Thousands of girls are forced into prostitution every year. It is a form of sexual slavery with the traffickers using coercive tactics including deception, fraud, intimidation, isolation, threat, and debt bondage or even force-feeding with drugs to gain control of their victims. Many of these young women are starved, beaten and consequently, forced into prostitution. Let's put a stop to this degrading treatment.

"The critical ingredient is getting off your butt and doing something. It's as simple as that. A lot of people have ideas, but there are few who decide to do something about them now. Not tomorrow. Not next week. But today. The true entrepreneur is a doer." - Nolan Bushnell

"I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I do know: The only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve." - Albert Schweitzer

Cartoon?



Ahhhh!!



What's the big deal? I'm only being cool.

Do you have any idea what you're doing to yourself?



What's cool about smoking? it has been proven that it causes cancer, mouth diseases, heart problems and it also contributes to stroke!!!

Ah!! I didn't know all that!!



Oh No! I've got to quit this habit

Friends, please stay away from smoking...Smokers are liable to die young

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"You measure the size of the accomplishment by the obstacles you had to overcome to reach your goals." - Booker T. Washington

"If you don't set goals, you can't regret not reaching them." - Yogi Berra

Successful people are always looking for opportunities to help others. Unsuccessful people are always asking, "What's in it for me?" - Brian Tracy

Tips on Setting Effective and Exciting Goals to Help You Succeed

Goal Setting is something a person works to accomplish. It can also be described as a proposed achievement or accomplishment towards which efforts are directed. People, who achieve their goals generally, are those who take time to clearly define what they want and pursue it realistically.

Here are some success strategies to follow in order to help you through the process of effective goals setting:

1: Effective goals setting needs time to ponder

A wishful thought will always remain a wishful thought. The thought comes into your mind as a nice idea and that is all it will be - a nice idea, unless you give that thought some real thought! So make sure that you allocate a reasonable amount of time to sit down and think about everything on your wish list - what do you want, who do you want to be, where do you want to go... take time to allow your mind to wonder, play in the midst of your imagination, and really unfold all your dreams and desires!

2: Effective goals setting requires putting pen to paper

I don't know about you, but if I had to really think hard, I could probably come up with countless ideas that I have come up with over the years that I have continuously forgotten about, or never been able to get round to doing - simply because I haven't written them down! We all have so much to think about and one can only imagine the millions of thoughts racing through our minds every second of the day - it's no wonder we are inclined to forget a few of the secrets of success we come up with from time-to-time. So once you have set time aside to ponder, don't forget to think about all your brilliant ideas, concepts and unexecuted plans that you have come up with in the past and at present that you would love to follow through on - and remember: the secret of success here lies in putting pen to paper, so write them down! Who knows what information you have been hiding from yourself all these years simply because you forget about it!

3: Effective goals setting should be practical

Now that you have been to cloud nine and back in dreamland, the secret of success lies in being able to be practical. I am not saying that you must not dream big, by all means, dream up mountains of ideas and wishes if you desire - those items can form part of your near and distant vision for you and your life. But in order to achieve a tangible and effective goals setting plan, you need to think about all the things that are

perhaps very much out of your comfort zone - yet possible (with a little hard work) to achieve. The success strategies here lie in your ability to set goals that are 20% out of your comfort zone, and not less. The reality is, if you are comfortable in your actions, you are no doubt doing the same things that you are used to doing that will get you the same results! You need to do things differently and get out of your comfort zone and into action (whilst not living in the clouds!)

4: Effective goals setting requires clear and defined actions

"One day I will become self employed". "One day I will become a millionaire". "One day I will..." One day may just be the day before you die if you don't get clear on when it is you want "one day" to be! By setting such open-ended goals you are simply allowing yourself a back-door escape for in-action. The secrets of success for your goals setting depends on your time-line that you define in order to hold yourself accountable and to keep your momentum going in order to reach your "deadline", otherwise you will be a wishful thinker and not a goal-getter! Don't forget to also clarify your goals for yourself - the more specific you are on what you want to achieve, the more you program your conscious and sub-conscious to help the specifics become reality. Don't leave anything open for interpretation, you may become self employed one day, but you may not be as successful as you would like to be - unless you define clearly the degree to which you want your goals fulfilled.

5: Effective goals setting involves motivation

In order to consistently stick to your goals, you should plan mini-rewards for yourself along the way in order to keep yourself motivated. Treat yourself to a day out, a dinner out, a shopping spree, whatever tickles your fancy - but make sure that the reward is pre-defined before you reach the pit-stop and issued only once you have reached your intended goal. Success strategies such as high impact equals high results can help you enjoy your achievements with love and gratification towards yourself - there no need to feel guilty for treating yourself, why? Because you know that you deserve it!

References:

- <http://ezinearticles.com/expert/samanthamcmurtrie>
- **Comprehensive Sexuality Education (Trainers' Resource Manual) by AHI**

BOOK REVIEW



Title of book: 'Trafficked'
ISBN: 978-978-142-967-5
Author: Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo
Publisher: Lantern Books
Year of publication: 2008
Pagination: 311 pages
Reviewer: Mervis Emelife (18 years old)

'TRAFFICKED' is a book that centers on a young Nigerian woman named Nneoma who in a bid to run away from home was tricked into prostitution slavery. From London, she was deported to Nigeria alongside 15 other girls. They were then led to Oasis, a centre where they were rehabilitated and given a new lease of life.

This novel addresses the ills of human trafficking from different perspectives; the emotional trauma faced by the trafficked, the worry brought upon the family members of the

trafficked, the fear that traffickers have of being caught etc. The author made use of literary devices as poetry, metaphors, euphemism, flashback etc. She also added spice by using some basic Igbo terms and proverbs. The Igbo culture was brought to light in the book with the author stating some of the traditional practices of the Igbo tribe.

Other themes in the book are on family love, patience, hope, goodness, loyalty and decency. The book is written in simple language making it easy to understand.

'Trafficked' shows how people are deceived into human trafficking, how they are used as sex slaves, the pain and sexual abuse they endure, how they lose at both ends and the shame they endure on being deported. However, it gives the impression that all trafficked persons can begin life anew by learning a trade or going back to school.

PROFILE OF A ROLE MODEL

Prof. Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo

(A prolific writer, lecturer, essayist and administrator)

Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo was born as the first of the six children of Joshua and Christiana Adimora. She was raised in Eastern Nigeria and combines the urban and rural environments as background and setting for her children's stories and adult fiction.

She obtained her Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Masters (MA) degrees in English from the University of Lagos and her Ph. D from University of Ibadan, in Nigeria. She also has a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) from University of Lagos where she is presently Head of English Department. She has lived in the North, East and Western parts of Nigeria and has traveled extensively in Africa, Europe and in the USA.

Her professional work experience include: teaching in secondary schools and a Teachers College and then becoming a University lecturer. She also worked in the press between 1992 and 1999 during which time she was able to write editorials, feature articles and maintain columns. Prof. Akachi can be termed as a lecturer, writer, novelist, critic, essayist, journalist, and administrator, all in one.

The amiable mother of three has also published over forty-five academic papers in local and international journals, fifteen books (thirteen for children) and some of her works appear as chapters in books. Some of her short stories also appear in five Anthologies. Two of her books have been translated into Swahili and Xhosa languages. The children's Sunday School's teacher regularly gives talks to children in schools and to women's clubs on topics such as culture and youth development in Nigeria, child upbringing and the education of the girl-child, etc. Recently, she launched four novels at a time and they have all gone to shake the literary market.



She is married to Professor Chris Ezeigbo and was the National Treasurer of the Association of Nigerian Authors from 1995 – 1997; Vice President of Women Writers of Nigeria (WRITA) from 1998 - 2000. Currently, Prof. Akachi is the First Vice President of P.E.N. Nigeria and the Financial Secretary of WRITA National. Prof. Adimora-Ezeigbo has won more than twenty literary and academic awards within and outside the shores of Nigeria and has also attended many sponsored academic conferences in Europe, America and Africa. She is a Research Fellow at the Royal Holloway University of London and the School of Language, Culture and Communication at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, in South Africa.



Prof. Akachi saw a role model in her mother while growing up because Mrs. Christiana Adimora was quite hard-working, independent and kind. As a young person she faced the challenge of how she was going to further her education after the civil war. But hard work, focus and her determination paid off as the Federal Government gave her scholarship to study in the University of Lagos. Her motto in life is to be the best she can be in all she does, and to help others if she is in a position to do so.

One of Prof. Akachi Adimora-Ezeigbo novels *'Trafficked'* centers on a young lady who was trafficked outside her country. The prolific writer is of the opinion that greedy people are often the ones who end up as victims to traffickers because they want to travel abroad at all cost and make money easily, so they are easily deceived by traffickers. She also cites poverty as another reason why people get trafficked because victims are made to believe that they would make it abroad and be able to get rich. She is motivated to write children books because of her love for children and young people.

For young people who aspire to be professional writers, she has this to say *'you need to work hard and be efficient in the use of language, creative, imaginative and able to write well. You need to be passionate about writing and read a lot. The prospect of writing as a career is bright but you have to be patient and develop your own style of writing'*.



Personal Hygiene

Personal hygiene is the first step to good grooming and good health. Elementary cleanliness is common knowledge. Neglect causes problems that you may not even be aware of. Many people with bad breath are blissfully unaware of it. Some problems may not be your fault at all, but improving standards of hygiene will control these conditions. Dandruff is a case in point. More often than you know, good looks are the result of careful and continuous grooming.

Every external part of the body demands a basic amount of attention on a regular basis. Here are some grooming routines and some complaints associated with neglect.

Menstrual Hygiene

No woman feels completely comfortable when she has her period. If it is not pre menstrual tension or stomach cramps it is the problem of dealing with the menstrual flow.

Technology offers sanitary pads, tampons or menstrual cups or caps to deal with the flow. The user has to decide what suits her best. Absorbent pads may be noticeable in form fitting clothes. They cause some soreness on the inner thighs.

Some women prefer tampon to external pads. A plug of absorbent cotton or gauze is inserted inside. But these should not be left unchanged beyond six hours. Some brands state that tampons left unchanged for more than 12-18 hours increases the possibility of toxic shock.

It is not clear what causes toxic shock. But there seems to be a link between tampons and *Toxic Shock Syndrome* (TSS). Approximately 1% of all menstruating women carry the bacteria in question (*Staphylococcus aureus*) in their vagina. Absorbent tampons provide the medium for them to grow and spread infection.

The menstrual cup (or cap), is inserted within and collects the flow and can be emptied, cleaned and re used.

Whatever the preference, washing is important. There need be no taboo about bath on these days. Some people have the problem of odour during menstruation. Cleanliness and change of pad/tampon as often as is necessary reduces this problem. It is not advisable to use perfumed pads or tampons. In fact, using powder in the genital area is not recommended.

Urinary infection

Females are especially prone to this infection. This happens when bacteria travel up the urethra and start breeding there. Chances of urinary infection are higher during pregnancy and after major surgery. This infection causes pain or a burning sensation during urination. Sometimes the urine is discoloured. Itching, frequent urination, fever and chills can also result from urinary infection. Though not a serious problem it can be rather an irritating and an awkward one. It is easy to catch this infection when toilets are not clean or when too many people share toilet facilities.

To avoid this infection improve overall standards of hygiene: both, regarding toilets and personal parts. Wash

or wipe front to back after urinating or defecating. Remember this when wiping or washing babies too, as a general rule. Do not wear tight fitting synthetic underwear.

Drink plenty of water. Do not hold back when you have the tendency to urinate.

Pinworms

Pinworms are about a quarter of an inch long. And they can cause plenty of discomfort. The worms come out of the anal opening to lay eggs at night. This leads to intense itching in the area. Disturbed sleep, mild pain and diarrhoea are possible consequences.

Children are especially prone to this complaint. The urge is to scratch this area. When scratching, eggs stick to the hand, and under the nails and infect anything the person touches. The eggs can pass through air, or by contact with infected food or bed linen to others who share the premises. The eggs are not affected by disinfectants and remain active in the dust for a long period.

A doctor has to be consulted to rid the worm infestation. Bed clothes, undergarments and nightwear of the infected person must be washed thoroughly, if possible in hot water. Sometimes all members of the family are advised to take deworming medication when one member is affected. Scrubbing hands well with soap before eating should check the problem.

Perspiration

The body perspires to keep the body temperature from rising. Sweat is 99% water. It has a small quantity of urea, salt and some other compounds. If the body perspires more, in hot weather, a slight increase in the intake of common salt is advised, to make good what is lost through perspiration.

Excessive perspiration can lead to the scaling of the skin or inflammation (*Dermatitis*). Usually this is no cause for worry. Some people sweat more, some less due to hereditary and body composition factors. Excessive perspiration is also a symptom of diabetes, anaemia and hyperthyroidism.

Athletes Foot

The skin becomes scaly. There are sores or blisters between toes. Often it spreads to the soles.

This infection is caused by a fungus. This breeds in warm wet places. This is a minor irritation and often disappears by itself. But sometimes these cracks and sores become the site for other infections.

Proper foot care can alleviate the condition. Rub off peelings gently. Wash feet well and apply powder. A mild fungicidal ointment at bedtime will help. Keep feet exposed. If you have to wear shoes, wear cotton socks.

Sometimes the blisters begin to ooze. Then soak feet in a potassium permanganate solution of recommended strength. Soak your feet in a warm bath for 10 minutes and then apply calamine lotion.

If the problem persists consult a doctor.

References:

- www.scif.com/safety/safetymeeting
- www.webhealthcentre.com/healthyliving/personal_hygiene

FOOD FOR
THOUGHT

"Dependent people need others to get what they want. Independent people can get what they want through their own efforts. Interdependent people combine their own efforts with the efforts of others to achieve their greatest success." - Stephen Covey

DO YOU WANT TO BE A GEOLOGIST?

The field of Geology encompasses the study of the composition, structure, physical properties, dynamics, and history of earth materials, and the processes by which they are formed, moved, and changed. The field is important for mineral and hydrocarbon extraction, knowledge about and mitigation of natural hazards, geotechnical engineering, and understanding past climates and environments with reference to present-day climate change. The professionals in this field are called **Geologists**.

Examples of the activities of Geologists include: the use of field, laboratory, and numerical analysis to understand the history of the earth and the processes that occur on and in the earth. In many cases, geologists also study modern soils, rivers, landscapes, and glaciers; investigate past and current life and biogeochemical pathways, and use geophysical methods to investigate the subsurface.

THE JOB

About a half of all Geologists are engaged in research and development. Most work on projects where they apply their knowledge. Many Geologists often work in teams and supervise other staff. They may also need to travel for meetings and seminars, both at home and overseas. Geologists are closely-related to a number of science and engineering subjects such as geography, hydrology, geophysics, chemistry and microbiology. This relationship reflects in the branches of geology which include:

- **Biogeochemistry and Geomicrobiology:** This involves the collecting of samples to determine biochemical pathways, identify new species of organisms which in turn help to identify new chemical compounds.
- **Paleontology or Paleobotany:** This deals with the excavation of fossil material for research into past life and evolution; collection of samples for geochronology and thermochronology.
- **Glaciology:** These entail the measurement of characteristics of glaciers and their motion.

Among its domain of knowledge and action are design of machinery and processes in the field of excavation, and others include Physical geology, Petrology, Sedimentology, Stratigraphy, Mineralogy, Tectonics and Structural geology. Being a broad area of study, geologists often specialize in certain aspects of the field. Some of these are: Structural geology, Economic geology, Mining geology, Petroleum geology, and Hydrogeology.

PROSPECTS/OUTLOOK

The employment outlook is fair to Geologists working for establishments dealing in oil, gas and solid minerals such as NNPC and its subsidiaries, construction and cement companies, and ministries of solid minerals and water resources. Other Geologists specialize in consultancy. Some Geologists with much experience are employed as teachers or lecturers in higher institutions, where they lecture various courses and some work as personal advisers to governments, directors of oil and gas companies and parastatals and also as self employed running a research institute dealing with excavations of various minerals.

Geologists often begin their career in field works, or as research assistants in various fields under the coverage of geology. After substantial experience they may be promoted to project leaders, programme managers or to management or research positions, but prospects vary with different employers. A geologist with a bachelor's degree may have limited promotion prospects. Postgraduate qualifications are helpful. More senior positions are less likely to involve field work.

Skills & Personal Qualities

- Physical mobility
- Communication skills
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Initiative
- Logic
- Methodical approach
- Problem solving ability
- Stamina
- Team work spirit
- Technical/ scientific ability
- Zeal/Passion

QUALIFICATIONS

Secondary school- relevant subjects include English Language, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography and physics. In addition to the academic qualifications, you need to possess the following personal qualities: love for adventure, curiosity, painstakingness, diligence and meticulousness in arriving at a conclusion on the subject of matter. Most of the universities offer courses on Geology.

References:

- The Magazine for The Victorious Youth Of this Generation Vol.9 No.3
- www.geologycareer.org/ifst/html/framest.htm
- www.dailylearningtips.com/careers/careers-geology.html
- www.indiaedu.com/career-courses/geology-Mineralogy
- www.dclm.org

CROSS WORD PUZZLE

By Abdul-Azeez Oguntoyinbo

Hi Guys, I have something really exciting in this edition. You think they are easy? Pick them out if you can.

GOOD LUCK!!!!

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| E | B | A | D | E | V | E | L | C | P | K | I | A | T | V |
| G | E | F | G | M | I | R | E | R | J | M | D | R | T | Z |
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ERADICATE ACHIEVE DEVELOP ENSURE COMBAT
IMPROVE PROMOTE REDUCE WARFARE ACCOMPLISH
SUPPORT ENCOURAGE SUSTAIN ENHANCE MODERATE



RESOURCES



The materials listed here are resources on adolescent development. These materials are available for use in the reference library at the AHI Youth Centre at 17 Lawal Street, Jibowu, Yaba, Lagos

Books



Family Life and HIV Education for Junior Secondary Schools Students' Handbook by Action Health Incorporated

Family Life and HIV Education Students' Handbook is developed for use by student at the Junior Secondary School level as a supplementary text with factual information on the Family Life and HIV Education (FLHE) Curriculum. It is organized around the five key concept in the approved FLHE curriculum to help young people learn about their bodies, physical and emotional changes that occur during adolescence; presenting how young people can acquire skills including steps to take in setting sexual limit and ways of refusing unwanted sexual advances; exposing young people to issues around HIV infection and prevention and encouraging young people to discuss relationships with family and friends, as well as addressing the social and cultural environments that influence the way they learn about and express their sexuality. Where appropriate, the handbook contains stories, illustrations, pictures and cartoon that will help the students understand the topics better.



TRAFFICKED

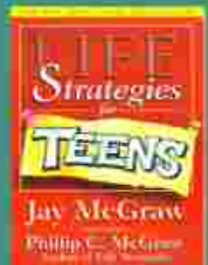
'TRAFFICKED' is a book that centers on a young Nigerian woman named Nneoma who in a bid to run away from home was tricked into prostitution slavery. From London, she was deported to Nigeria alongside 15 other girls. They were then led to Oasis, a centre where they were rehabilitated and given a new lease of life.

'Trafficked' shows how people are deceived into human trafficking, how they are used as sex slaves, the pain and sexual abuse they endure, how they lose at both ends and the shame they endure on being deported. However, it gives the impression that all trafficked persons can begin life anew by learning a trade or going back to school.



'YOUTHS TO THE RESCUE OF A NATION' is a book for all Nigerian youth as well as youth all over the Globe. It is a timely contribution to the socio-economic and political developments of Nigeria.

It spells out all that youths need in order to become an instrument of change in this nation. It also pinpoints several ways Nigeria can overcome obstacles that are preventing her from the realization of the dreams and aspirations of her founding fathers. The need for youth involvement in the socio-economic and political decision making processes are also highlighted.



About The Author: **Jay Phillip McGraw** was born on the 12th of September, 1979, in Wichita County, Texas. He is the son of Phil McGraw and Robin McGraw. He has one younger brother, Jordan (a musician).

He has written several books aimed at young people, based on his father's books, the well-known *Dr. Phil*. Jay has also appeared on *Dr. Phil's* TV show.

The book talks about ten different non-written laws that will help you get on just well in life.

