

SIBO - LIFESTYLE

ISSUE NO. 16 AUGUST 2021

Dreams/Vision:

Future journaling. Living from strength with Joyce Mutangara. The importance of action in dream pursuit.

Wellness:

Faith that results in peace.



PRISCILLA
P. ANNOR

INTRODUCING HER ROYAL
HIGHNESS OHEMAA, THE
GHANAIAN QUEEN

Hello Diamonds,

Welcome to the August 2021 edition of *Sibo-Lifestyle Magazine*, where diamonds emerge. I hope you're still going after those dreams and believing for things to work in your favour. I know it gets tough sometimes because of some of the circumstances we find ourselves in but we have to hang in there and work towards the future we want for ourselves.

In this issue we get the honour of hearing from Priscilla P. Annor, a well-travelled international professional who's worked in different countries across Africa and Europe. She is a big dreamer, not just a dreamer but one who goes after her dreams and achieves the things she sets out to do. She is living proof that dreams do come true if you dream big and pursue those dreams. I hope her story encourages you to keep your dream pursuit journey going strong.

The *Living from strength with Joyce Mutangara* section this month looks at 4 different strengths, namely: Focus, Futuristic, Harmony and Ideation. Who knows, you might recognise yourself in one of the strengths, I definitely saw myself in the Futuristic strength, which described me perfectly. In fact, having taken the Clifton StrengthsFinder test, Futuristic is number one on my top 5 strengths. If you can, take the online test yourself because it will help you to identify your strengths and use them for your benefit.

We further discuss taking control of your mind through the use of "future journaling." If you seek peace, in the wellness section we talk about how faith can result in peace.

I hope you find something in this month's issue that will take you a step closer to your dreams or make you believe for more in your life. Continue to dream big, act on those dreams and never give up on your dreams.

With love,
Sibo Hlabangana
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

AUGUST 2021

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SIBO-LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

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Dreaming big, having a vision for your life,
continual growth, pursuing success, development

DREAMS AND VISION



Taking control of your mind and future journaling

By Sibö Hlabangana

In the July 2021 issue of the magazine, I talked about not letting your environment limit you and how your thoughts play a big role in that. It's important to take stock of your thoughts and focus on good thoughts, especially about your life, instead of entertaining limiting thoughts.

It's easy to think about what's already happened in your life and what is happening in your life right now. What's difficult is thinking about your future and making it contradict your past as well as your present. Thinking of your future as being wonderful and you living the life you dream of, or for some of you even beginning to dream because you've never thought to do that. That's the difficult part. And yet, that's what I'm suggesting you do. Not for me or for anyone else, but for yourself. To give you something to look forward to. To give you hope.

A loss of hope leads to feeling bad about your life and about life in general and about a lot of other things. We might get hope from elsewhere but sometimes you need to give yourself

hope. Telling yourself you have a bright future ahead of you is one example of that. It's a way of taking control of your mind. One way you can control your mind is how you start your day because that will filter into the rest of your thoughts during the day. One way I make an effort to control my thoughts for the day is journaling in the morning.

Future journaling

Journaling is part of my morning routine. I have different journals for different things. For example, in one I write about what's going on, especially things I think are worth noting, such as the Holy Spirit revealing something truly awesome. I also have one where I do what I call future journaling. The YouTube video I watched talking about it was calling it "scripting" but I prefer "future journaling." It's writing about your future as though it is happening or has already happened, basically dreaming on paper. I write as though the life I dream of is taking place as I write about it. Let me share one example. To give you an idea of my situation as I write this, I'm in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, a landlocked country. We get regular power cuts, we have water rationing etc. I'm currently a non-property owner. I say that, to show you that there is no evidence of what you're about to read in my current life. Yet I'm still believing for it. This is what the entry from this particular day says:



May 26, 2021 future journaling entry:

Thank You Spirit (the Holy Spirit) for being with me always! Thank You for your continued guidance and for directing my steps. I'm so happy and grateful that I live in Camps Bay, Cape Town, in my own apartment. I love living here. Every time I see the stunning ocean view from

my bedroom, I'm reminded that dreams do come true and that God loves me. The view from the lounge and balcony is even more spectacular.

I have amazing furniture that I love and beautiful art pieces all around my apartment, all chosen by me. I had such an awesome time furnishing my place, handpicking each piece of furniture and artwork. Now everywhere I look around my place, it is so me. I'm so happy that I can afford anything I want so I was able to purchase everything I wanted, including things that had to be shipped in from other countries, like the Joseph Klibansky artwork, the "she will find what is lost" poster, the kintsugi bowls, etc. When I walk into my apartment, it really feels like home.

The lounge colours are cream and a light blue that's close to green. It's so beautiful. I enjoy living here. I feel so blessed to actually live here. Me, a black girl from Bulawayo, living in such a luxury apartment. I love it! Thank You Daddy (God) for allowing me to live here.



I feel at peace living here. The whole apartment is my serenity place. It has become a sanctuary for me. God's protection surrounds me everywhere I am, I feel it even more here, at home. Every morning I do my 2 hour morning routine to stay in a state of serenity and every single day I live with a settled heart. I enjoy spending time alone at my place, living here, working here, resting here, relaxing here and just doing life here. I also enjoy having people over sometimes. People who are kindred spirits, who get me and I get them. People I have chosen to bring into my life, people I feel safe with. My place acts as a safe space for us.

I am also able to share bits and pieces of my life with my audience and supporters to encourage them that dreams do come true and to show them that God is good and that anything is possible. Watching me live in my dream life makes people want more for their

lives and that leads to them starting their transformation journey, resulting in them living in their own dreams.

The things happening in my life and the experiences I keep having are something I love sharing because with each unbelievable story that proves what I wrote in my book "Dreaming in Bulawayo," the more people believe that you can indeed create your dream life. My life is proof that anything is possible. I truly love my life. Thank You Jesus for choosing me for Your glory. I love You more with each passing day.

Your turn

If you choose to journal or future journal, you get to decide what it looks like for you. It could be about your thoughts and feelings, about anything really. Remember, what I just gave is one example. Some of my other entries talk about me having a new laptop because the one I have now is acting up and affects my work. I'll describe what it can do and the things I get to do with it, how fast it is and how it has a name of a fruit. So do it your own way. Future journal according to what will help you shift your focus, from past problems and current crises to focusing on the fantastic future that you're hoping for.





Living from strength with Joyce Mutangara – Focus, Futuristic, Harmony and Ideation

This is part of a series of articles on different strengths that we as individuals have. For more on other strengths, you can see previous issues of the magazine.

Everyone is born with talents. Talents are our natural way of thinking, feeling and behaving that can be productively applied. When we invest and develop our talents, they then become strengths. A strength is the ability to consistently do an activity to near perfection. It is about the WAY we achieve success, and all of us have a 'way.'

There is an assessment called Clifton Strengths Finder, and it takes about 45 minutes to do online, answering various questions. Once you are done, it then sends you a strength report. There are 34 strengths in total and the assessment calculates your most dominant strengths from number 1 to number 34 in sequence of their dominance. You choose whether you want the report of your full 34 or just your dominant first 5 strengths.

In this issue we are going to look at the strengths of FOCUS, FUTURISTIC, HARMONY and IDEATION.



FOCUS

“Where am I headed? You ask yourself. You ask this question every day. Guided by this theme of Focus, you need a clear destination. Lacking one, your life and your work, can quickly become frustrating. And so each year, each month and each week you set goals. These goals then serve as your compass, helping you determine priorities and make the necessary corrections to get back on course. Your Focus is powerful because it forces you to filter; you instinctively evaluate whether or not a particular action will help you move toward your goal. Those that don’t are ignored. In the end, then, your focus forces you to be efficient. When others start to wander down other avenues, you bring them back to the main road, which makes you a valuable team member. You keep everyone on point.” *Tom Rath, StrengthsFinder 2.0.*

Natasha, a Real Estate Research and Project Manager, has Focus in her top 5. For the last 5 years she has been able to do her degree and work at the same time. She used her focus to prevent distractions and stay on track. Being a young lady, this is not a small feat. She does her work with intentionality and clarity for what is to be achieved. She doesn’t need cheerleaders to be motivated. Having clear goals to achieve, does that. The goals can even be for a long time ahead, as far as 20 years. That’s how powerful it is.

She is good at keeping the team on track and quickly pointing out when there is the danger of getting side tracked. Her reports and spreadsheets are precise and chronologically lead to set goals and targets. Her team can rely on her to make sure priorities stay that way, and

processes are followed through. Natasha knows how precious time is, and her Focus helps her to keep her eye on the prize.

Now let's look at the strength of **Futuristic**.



FUTURISTIC

“Wouldn't it be great if...?” You are the kind of person who loves to peer over the horizon. The future fascinates you. As if it were projected on the wall, you see in detail what the future might hold, and this detailed picture keeps pulling you forward, into tomorrow. While the exact content of the picture will depend on your other strengths and interests – a better product, a better team, a better life, or a better world – it will always be inspirational to you. You are a dreamer who sees visions of what could be and who cherishes those visions. When the present proves too frustrating and the people around you too pragmatic, you conjure up your visions of the future and they energise you. They can energise others too. People will want to latch on to the hope you bring.” *Tom Rath, StrengthsFinder 2.0.*

Peter, the CEO of my husband's company, has Futuristic in his top 5. He is very charismatic and enthusiastic about what the future can look like. His presentations are always inspiring and give a lot of hope. For him, the future is always bright. He is not limited to today or yesterday's instances, the future is always better. His greatest contribution to his business is his ability to paint the visual picture of possibilities that are positive and transformational. This makes work purposeful for those in his arena of influence.

He works with legacy in mind, wanting younger generations to have a better future. So he works closely with schools and universities, ensuring they have what it takes for the future he

projects is coming. This futuristic ability makes his business a pace setter in its industry, making national leaders take notice. He is an icon of inspiration in the agricultural industry, not just for Zimbabwe, but the whole of Africa. And that's how he sees it too.

The next strength is **Harmony**.



“You look for areas of agreement. In your view there is little to be gained from conflict and friction, so you seek to hold them to a minimum. When you know that the people around you hold differing views, you try to find the common ground. You try to steer them away from confrontation and toward harmony. When others start to argue about their pet theory or concept, you steer clear of the debate, preferring to talk about practical, down-to-earth matters on which you can all agree. In your view we are all in the same boat, and we need this boat to get where we are going. It is a good boat. There is no need to rock it just to show that you can.” *Tom Rath, StrengthsFinder 2.0.*

I have Harmony in my top 5 strengths. I believe everyone should do the work he/she has been assigned to do. If we are all committed to the work we have been given, then there will be harmony and productivity. There is no need for shouting and unnecessary conflict. Everything can be resolved if we sit and discuss with respect and the intention for a resolution that works for all. My Harmony helps me take different viewpoints and help people find common ground.

I remember struggling with the adversarial component of practising law, and when I discovered it was because of my Harmony strength, I focused on resolving disputes before they got to court. This ended up working better for all those concerned. The anticipation of trouble and conflict that I wanted to avoid, made me good at vetting contracts to ensure possible eventualities were taken care of. Now I'm using my Harmony to help individuals understand and integrate their strengths in all that they do.

Our final strength is **Ideation**.



“You are fascinated by ideas. What is an idea? An idea is a concept, the best explanation of the most events. You are delighted when you discover beneath the complex surface an elegantly simple concept to explain why things are the way they are. An idea is a connection. Yours is the kind of mind that is always looking for connections, and so you are intrigued when seemingly disparate phenomena can be linked by an obscure connection. An idea is a new perspective on familiar challenges. You revel in taking the world we all know and turning it around so we can view it from a strange but strangely enlightening angle. You love all these ideas because they are profound, because they are novel, because they are clarifying, because they are contrary, because they are bizarre. For all these reasons you derive a jolt of energy whenever a new idea occurs to you. Others may label you creative or original or conceptual or even smart. Perhaps you are all of these. Who can be sure? What you are sure of is that ideas are thrilling. And on most days this is enough.” *Tom Rath, StrengthsFinder 2.0.*

My sister has Ideation in her top 5. She does not run out of ideas and possibilities. At school she was popular because she always had different ways of doing things. So when she led a

club, the students found it exciting. It was not surprising when at the end of her last year, she won the medal for the most popular senior in the school. Her Ideation provokes inspiration and brings excitement to life. She also loves interior designing, and her Ideation helps her have creations for any space and room.

Combined with her other strengths she is able to bring ideas to life. I have seen her transform spaces from drudgery to modern and classic. It's from her ability to see what could be, through all sorts of ideas. She brings innovation and freshness to the team. She has an 'anything is possible' attitude that influences the atmosphere of her presence and motivates those around her to think outside the box. One of her goals is to break glass ceilings, especially for women.





The importance of action in dream pursuit

By Sibö Hlabangana

If you've read previous issues of the magazine, you'll know I'm a big dreamer and I encourage dreaming big and having a vision for your life. Above that, I advocate for believing in your dreams, visualizing them and doing things that keep your dreams top of mind. One thing that is vital in your dream pursuit is **ACTION**. I think most of the time I assume it goes without saying but I think it begs mentioning in case someone out there just dreams and sits at home watching TV the rest of the day.

When inspiration hits, **act**. When the opportunity arises, **act**. When you know you have to, **act**. Don't wait for someone to tell you, you are something, or you can do something. Tell yourself you are what you want to be and when you're ready, act.

In 2017, I dreamed of being a writer. I started calling myself a writer before I even did anything. Before long, I was blogging, which in turn led to writing books. Now I've written and published 5 books. It helped that before I acted I'd already had a mind-set shift and that I now believed in my dreams.

God will send you signs and signals, open your eyes and ears and look out for these. Don't wait until everything is perfect or until someone tells you it's ok to act, just do it! Yes, think about what you're doing and consider your actions but don't dwell on that for too long until the opportunity is no longer available. Be willing to be wrong or to fail sometimes; it will teach you something you will need along the way. In a 'James Altucher Show' podcast Daymond

John, the founder of FUBU, said before he invests in a start-up he considers how many times the person has failed because he doesn't want him to fail and 'learn lessons on his dime.' So you need those tries and failures for you to know better next time.

That doesn't mean you go into it thinking you'll fail or without looking at what others before you have done. For instance, before I started my blog, I Googled 'what not to do as a blogger,' 'mistakes I made as a blogger,' 'what not to do when you're a newbie blogger' etc. I wanted to know what mistakes others made so I would be able to avoid them. The people that wrote those learned from experience. Because of that, I didn't have to anymore, I instead got to learn from their experience. Experience is great but if someone else's experience can teach you something, learn from that. It will save you time and energy. That's why mentors matter, whether in real life or like mine who are from books or speakers and coaches that I watch.



When I felt inspired to start Sibolifestyle Magazine, I acted. If I hadn't done that, you wouldn't be reading this right now. The magazine wouldn't exist if I hadn't taken action. The action might be different in your case but when your mind-set has changed, and it is in line with what you want to see in your life, when the time comes, act! This step is very important. You'll get ideas and opportunities, it then remains up to you to take action. I can't tell you what that action will be, but you will know when it's time to act. If you don't act, having a vision for your life, dreaming big and everything else would have been in vain. Only YOU can take this step; no one can do it for you.



DIAMOND OF THE MONTH



Introducing her Royal Highness Ohemaa, the Ghanaian Queen – An interview with Priscilla P. Annor

By Sibò Hlabangana

In each issue of Sibò-Lifestyle Magazine, we celebrate individuals that dream big, pursue their dreams and are pursuing success on their own terms. I'd like us to learn from them, to see how like us they are or how they differ from us. For us to see what we can do differently or continue to do to pursue our own dreams and success. This month we get to journey through the adventurous life of Priscilla P. Annor.

I came across Priscilla's blog "Adventures of Ohemaa" online when I was looking to see if there were any crazy dreamers like me who had made a list of 300 things that they want in life, as suggested by Steve Harvey in one of his motivational videos. As I went through her list

and further explored her blog, I thought to myself “I’ve found a Ghanaian version of myself!” Most of the things on her list are on mine. She’s the reason I’ve added Ghana to my list of places to visit because I can’t wait to meet her in person. She is a big dreamer, not just a dreamer but one who goes after her dreams and achieves the things she sets out to do. She is living proof that dreams do come true if you dream big and pursue those dreams. She has lived and worked in different countries across Africa and Europe and looks set to take over the world. I for one am excited to watch her story continue to unfold. I believe you’re going to love her and enjoy learning from her as she shares how she approaches life.

Where are you from and where do you currently live? If not your country, how did you end up in the country you’re living in?

I am a Ghanaian living in Accra, the capital town. In fact, I just relocated, I haven’t even been home for a month (giggles) but apart from Accra Ghana I have lived and worked in France, Spain and the Czech Republic.



Tell us about your childhood. What was life like for you growing up?

My family was very fortunate to be financially independent. I had a great childhood filled with love and all other nice things and I am grateful for that. As the daughter of a retired teacher and pastor, my childhood might sound boring. I was either studying in my room or in church. My vacations were also spent in the community library, school vacation classes or church conventions so I was good. As a child I didn’t like all this because I rarely got the time to play. My parents were also strict so I never got the freedom to go out with the neighbours/friends

or visited them. One of my fondest childhood memories is the genuine love I enjoyed in the family and the intentional parenting we received. I always pray and thank God for my family.

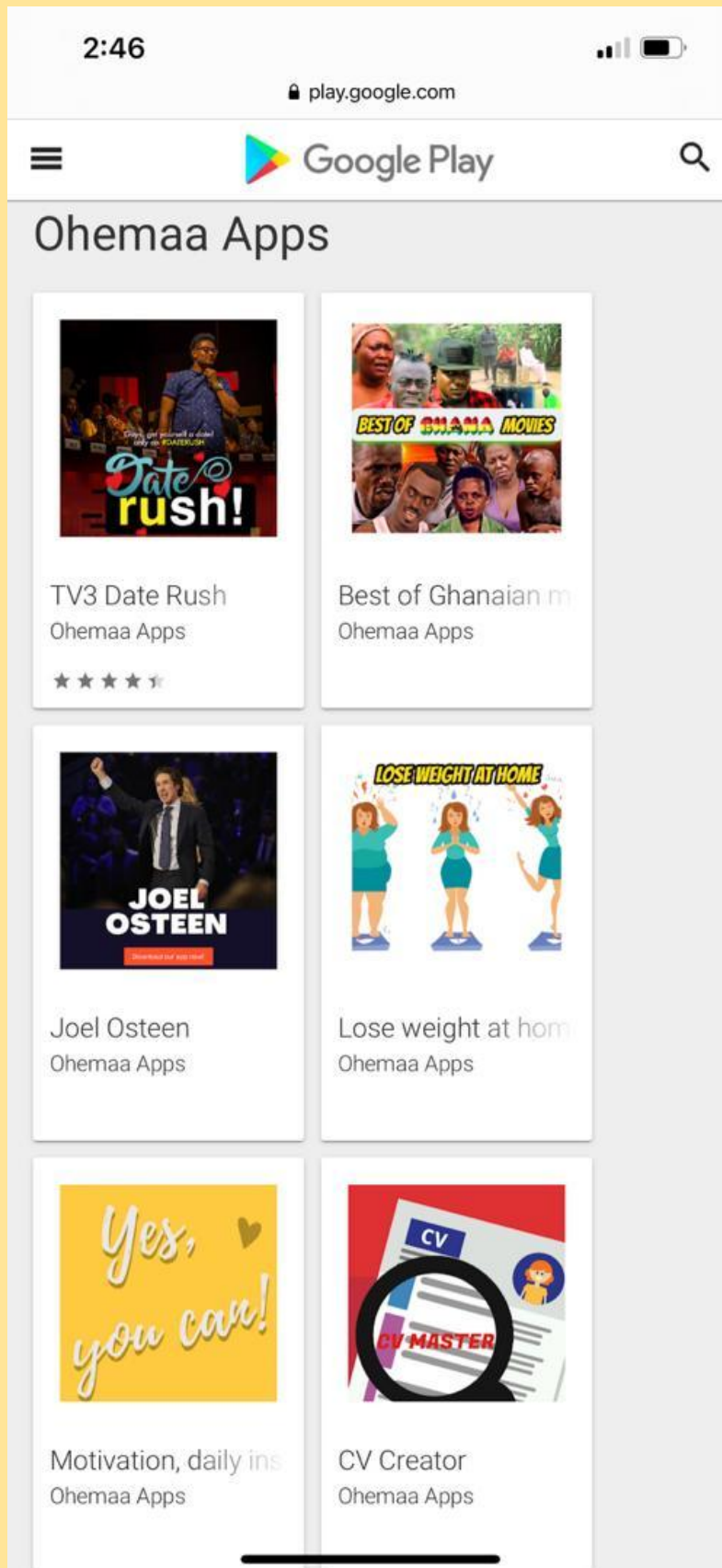
Growing up, did you imagine you would do the things you've been able to do in your life?

Growing up, I was already obsessed with fantasies. I thought of being multiple things. I would close my eyes and imagine myself as the queen or first lady, an inventor, a UN staff member, an entrepreneur, an author, a flight attendant, an archaeologist, a wealthy housewife, a world traveller etc. All that but I never thought I would travel to Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia on a work trip to participate in the Africa Regional Conference on Population and Development or to Pretoria, South Africa to organise the 7th Africa Population Conference which was attended by 800+ ministers, senior officials as well as relevant agencies of the United Nations. I never for a moment ever imagined myself living and working in France, the Czech Republic or Spain. Overall life turned out to be great and I am enjoying it. I am still interested to see what more life has in store for me.



So far, what are you most proud of achieving in your life?

I am proud that in my life I have found my purpose and what I am passionate about which is to make a difference in the world by helping people and inspiring people to enjoy life to the fullest. I love charity work and have over the past six years been providing support to orphans, the blind and other vulnerable individuals in the society through Tatas and Friends Foundation and other charitable organisations. During the pandemic, I transferred money to relatives and friends. I didn't think of it as huge but when they called and narrated how the money came at a time they were really in need or how the money helped them in solving a problem, I was



happy. I feel great about having the opportunity to deposit assistance and gifts in the life of another person.

What are you currently working on?

I quit my job in Europe and relocated home so I am looking into new opportunities with government and international organisations in Ghana. At the moment, I keep myself busy building Android mobile applications on Google Play. I sell handwoven African Kente cloths and I have started a packing and moving company, KAAK Movers Ghana.

What did you do before what you're doing now?

I was working as a Senior Process Executive (Bilingual) where I served as a point of contact for software applications, troubleshooting resolutions and escalations. I also managed customers' feedback, assisted in global quality reporting and also helped in employees' onboarding and offboarding/separation processes. After working for almost 2 years in this position, I made the decision to resign and follow my heart. Today, I

am back home and reconnected with my family, building mobile applications and looking forward to contribute to the development of my country Ghana.

What made you decide to start Adventures of Ohemaa? How did you come up with the idea and why that in particular?

Adventures of Ohemaa actually started when I lost my job unexpectedly in a foreign country. I was however fortunate to secure a job within a week but because of the country's change of employer documentation processes and paperwork, I had to stay home jobless for almost three months. I am not really a blogger; I didn't even consider myself to be a writer but I had always wanted to start a blog. I hate being idle so it was during this dark period of my life at home that I decided to start blogging and share my experiences, my passion and dreams with the world with the hopes of helping and also inspiring people to enjoy life, achieve their dreams and be better at being who they are. I started with a post, people engaged and related well to it so that encouraged me to continue.

**What do you enjoy about what you do?**

I love that I get to learn new things daily. Creating an app seems extremely complicated but it gets better and the fun part is you only need a phone, a laptop and an internet connection to build apps.

What challenges do you face in what you do?

Self-doubt. Quite frankly, it sometimes gets complex that you begin to believe you don't have the skills and capacity to build. When those voices come, I don't dwell on it, I just pause, breathe in and research on the way forward.

How has COVID-19 affected what you do and what have you learned as a result?

Honestly, COVID-19 didn't really affect me much and I am extremely grateful to God for that. I never stopped working. I worked from home throughout the pandemic until I decided to resign. I wrote about it on my blog: <https://ohemaalife.com/2020/04/12/living-my-best-quarantine/> I will say COVID-19 affected only my travel plans. I had planned to explore at least 5 new countries in 2020 but I was able to do only two countries: Budapest and Greece, I also wrote about that on my blog: <https://ohemaalife.com/2020/10/04/greece-my-first-coronacation/> It also triggered my decision to relocate home and be with my family. I remember when I announced this to the family. They were elated, they had been encouraging me to relocate for over 2 years. My flight got cancelled due to the COVID situation (I am still waiting for my refund from the airline) but luckily, I was able to purchase a new ticket with KLM.



If someone wanted to start the journey of pursuing their dreams, what insights would you give them?

Firstly, dream vividly and whatever dream it is don't stop there, take it a step further by writing it down and then following it up with a clear-cut plan to make it happen. I believe the planning part is the missing link to why so many people give up on their dreams. You don't have to have it all figured out or wait for approval. Not everyone will understand your dreams. You just need to focus on your dreams, believe in yourself, remain positive and make your dreams happen! Research and read a lot. Take courses if you have to, learn from people with similar dreams, be focused, believe in yourself and most importantly, don't give up on your dreams. I am 100% rooting for you!

Do you have dreams, goals or a vision for your life?

Oh yes, I do. I cannot even imagine not having a dream, goal or vision, it's very dangerous. It is like a journey without a destination, you head nowhere. Same way, if you do not know what you want in your life, you will just live anyhow and waste your life. I believe everyone should have dreams, goals or a vision in life. This gives life a purpose, direction and meaning. It shapes your life choices. I have BIG dreams (smiles.) You should check my blog for the list of goals that I am committed to achieving before I leave this beautiful earth. My ultimate goal is to enjoy life every single day to the fullest and be the best I can be, so I am always inspired to work towards this.

**Have you recorded the above in any way? If yes, how?**

I have it everywhere. I have some on my blog <https://ohemaalife.com/dream-list/> and in my journal. I have them as a wallpaper on my laptop, phone and iPad. I have them on a vision board in my room and I also have it written on my Notion app on my phone which is convenient as I am able to easily edit and update as and when needed.

Have any of your dreams or goals come true or been achieved?

Yes, definitely yes, a lot but there are still more to be achieved. I had always dreamed of having deep and meaningful relationships, a master's degree, work with international businesses and organisations, studying abroad, traveling to new places, visiting a castle,

learning new languages, working in foreign countries, walking on frozen lake etc and thanks be to God all this has been realised. There are still more dreams to achieve and experience.

What drives you in life? What keeps you going?

I am driven by the desire to enjoy life to the fullest, to be the best at what I do and also make the world a better place by helping others. Many times, I think of ways that I can improve myself, enjoy life or put a smile on someone's face. There is so much to learn and experience here on earth.



What does success look like for you?

Success is being able to turn my dreams and vision into reality. I am fascinated by the future and excited just by thinking about what might happen next.

Have you ever failed at something or been disappointed after not being chosen for something? If yes, what happened and how did you handle the situation?

Absolutely, but I have learned over the years to look at failures or rejections differently. Actually, many of my greatest blessings have come out of what I perceived as failures, disappointments or rejections. I remember failing in my French exams in my first year at university. I had never failed woefully in an exam before so I was frustrated and desperate to abandon French to save my GPA in school. I was fortunate to have my supportive parents who

advised me not to just give up but to try again and put in more effort. I invested in French books, CD's, listened to RFI, joined French clubs, reached out to people who were better than me and invested more time in studying. Gradually, I became better and performed wonderfully in all my exams. I got my first job right after university thanks to my French and all my traveling began from the strong desire to travel to France to improve on my French.



Years ago when I got laid off by my job without any reason, I felt my life had collapsed around me. I was less than 2 months in a new country without any real friends and jobless all of a sudden. I was hurt and felt betrayed but I purposely decided not to focus on the “whys” and focus on “what next.” That very evening, I went out with colleagues to have fun and did the same the following day. Being at home gave me the chance to write my experiences and ideas which birthed my blog, I travelled to new places I may never have done, deepened friendships and of course I secured a job with better conditions where I used French, developed and explored more skills.

There's always a good in the bad. Many times, when we face failures or rejection, we personalize it. I do believe failing is always for a purpose. It never means we are not good enough but simply means there is something more to be learned or another direction to be taken and ultimately to make life better. I was one of the Top 7 excellent workers so when my contract got terminated it came as a surprise to all. Personally, I had a strong belief that as usual, I was being protected and being redirected. If you find yourself experiencing failure, disappointment or rejection, quit focusing on the loss and start focusing on what you can become. Train your mind to always look for the blessings in everything. And to be completely honest, I am grateful for things not working out the way I once hoped they would. Steve

Maraboli puts it best “Every time I thought I was being rejected from something good, I was actually being redirected to something better.”

What places have you travelled to or lived? (Countries or cities)

I’ve travelled both on work trips and personally to many cities in different countries. I don’t think I could name all the cities so I will go with the countries. I have been to Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Dubai, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ivory Coast, Luxemburg, Monaco, Netherlands, Spain, Slovakia, South Africa, Switzerland, Togo, United Kingdom, and transited in Egypt, Libya, Portugal.



What did you love about the places you’ve travelled to or lived?

Every country I have visited has its own beauty, its own culture, unique stories and iconic sites with historical meanings. Exploring and learning about the history, food, music, dance, fashion, experiencing life in a new place, trying new things and meeting new people is what I love most about the places I have travelled to or lived. Living in Spain gave me a new perspective on life: to take things slowly, pay attention to details, live in the moment and enjoy every day to the fullest. Oh the food! I love traveling to different gourmet destinations to have a taste of their food varieties. I love Hungarian goulash, Greek salad, Paella from Spain, Ethiopian Injera, Czech Republic beer etc. There are so many hidden gems in the world

and discovering each of them makes life more exciting. I love getting to travel and I am grateful to be able to do that.



What have you learned from your travel experiences?

I am naturally a curious person, eager to learn and love to have fun, and traveling combines these perfectly. I must confess that traveling opened my eyes to things I had never even dreamed of. I got closer to people of a different sexual orientation than me, smokers, atheists, danced with Latinos, drunk with the Czechs etc. I've challenged stereotypes and judgments about people and places. I met and became friends with people from Austria, Columbia, Italy, Germany, Spain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, India, Nepal, Nigeria, Russia, Mexico, Tunisia, UK, Poland, Czech Republic, South Africa, Syria etc. This has exposed me to different cultures, religions, viewpoints, sexual orientations, which has taught me to respect, tolerate and be open to people that are different from me.

I've stepped outside my comfort zone and dared to be more adventurous (walking on a frozen lake, canopy, cable car etc.) Traveling has literally revolutionised my life. I've been extremely blessed to have the time, health and resources to travel and now that I've had a taste, it's piqued my curiosity about what more is out there? Counting down the days until my next travel.

What has been your most enriching travel experience and why?

In 2018, I got an internship opportunity in Barcelona which gave me a rich opportunity to learn more about the many different ways of living. The Spanish are friendly and know how to enjoy themselves so a genuine welcome is guaranteed. I met incredible people, both travellers and locals, who taught me so much in so many different ways. Spain is a beautiful country with lots of beautiful beaches and sightseeing. Although Barcelona can be a hectic city, I love that



the locals do not let themselves be rushed or stressed like the French. I love how they take the time to enjoy living. The city has incredible views from any angle with magnificent architectural buildings and details.

You will be blown away by the richness of detail of the *Sagrada Familia*. It's a feast for the eyes! A walk through the *Passeig de Gràcia* also feels like being on a filmset. There are lots of luxury shops, beautiful works of Gaudi like the *Casa Batlló*, *Casa Mila "La Pedrera"* and other modernist buildings. I relished going to the beaches especially at night to swim and watch the sunsets. Spain holds so many special memories for me. I recommend night swimming in Barceloneta, a summer trip to Ibiza or Christmas lightings in Málaga and of course the delicious paella food. It was an enriching experience living in Spain.

Are you in any way or form taking care of or feeding your mind, spirit, body and soul? If yes, how are you doing that?

Absolutely! At home we gather every morning at 5:30am for our family devotion where we pray, sing praises, discuss the word of God and recite affirmations together. This has helped in building my spiritual life and my confidence to live, to thrive and to be. The mind is a powerful and extraordinary tool so I am very conscious of thinking and focusing only on the positives and what I want in my life daily. I love reading and watching inspirational and motivational materials. I smile and laugh a lot, life is too short to live grumpy or sad. I easily forgive and also let go.



Body wise, I am an intentional healthy living freak. Right after our family devotion, we do aerobics together as a family and sometimes go for at least 30 minutes morning walk. I drink lots of water, at least 2000ml a day. I am very careful of what I put into my body. I take lots of vegetables and fruits and rarely take sugary foods.

How do you show yourself love, if you do that?

Oh, how I love myself! I call myself “Ohemaa” which means queen in the Ghanaian language so you can imagine how I live. I love to celebrate and pamper myself by getting the best things as much as I can. I love dressing up just to feel and look great, take pictures and videos and just admire. I love looking in the mirror and flattering myself. I save to travel and go to expensive places and pretend to be wealthy.

Do you have a morning routine? If yes, what does it look like?

I do have a morning routine which I passionately talked about on my blog. I arise with enthusiasm to greet the day with a family devotion at 5:30am. I exercise, drink a glass or two

of lukewarm water with a half freshly squeezed lemon or sometimes diluted apple cider vinegar, listen to worship and inspirational music and then take my shower. The best part of my mornings is my breakfast. I never skip breakfast (usually tea or cereal, eggs and toast) unless I am fasting. I read, write in my gratitude journal, listen to any inspirational or motivational podcasts to start my day positively and start moving through my to-do-list for the day.

Do you have any people you consider role models?

Just Michelle Obama, she is smart, bold, graceful, effortlessly chic and leads by example.

What 3 books or podcasts have played a role in your personal development and growth?

Books:

- I. How to win friends and influence people – Dale Carnegie
- II. The purpose driven life. What on earth am I here for? – Rick Warren
- III. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People – Stephen Covey

Podcasts:

- I. Joel Osteen Daily Podcast
- II. Enjoying Everyday Life – Joyce Meyer
- III. Duolingo

For someone at the beginning of pursuing their dreams, what book would you suggest they start with?

I would suggest not only reading “Woman, Act now” by Anna McCoy, but also following and practising the tasks included in the book.

If you were to be well known for something, what would you want it to be? Or how would you want to be remembered at the end of your life?

Simply as someone who wholeheartedly served humanity, inspired people to enjoy life and be a better version of themselves.

What life lessons or thoughts would you like to leave the reader with?

Personally, I have adopted 4G’s which is God, Goals, Gratitude and Giving.

1. First of all, readers must know that it all starts with **God**. Without Him, we cannot. Without us, He will not so commit yourself and everything totally to Him and good success will follow you.

2. **Goals:** Set clear goals that matter to you. Be specific and explicit about what you want and why. You should be passionate enough to want it and believe. Readers can read more about goals on my blog.

3. **Gratitude:** Practicing gratitude is a key to living a happy life. It should be the first activity when you open your eyes in the morning and the last activity when you close them at night. A heart of gratitude leaves no room for complaining. I talked extensively about gratitude on my blog.

4. **Give:** Giving is a life hack/investment. Give more to others than is required of you. Giving should be your lifestyle. If you want your dreams to come to pass, help somebody else's dream come to pass. Give, and you will receive, it's that simple!



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**TAKE CARE OF
YOURSELF**

Taking care of spirit, mind,
body and soul

WELLNESS



Faith that results in peace

By Sibò
Hlabangana

Do you ever think you know something and then you discover some other aspect of it that makes you realise you didn't know much at all? For me, one area where I feel that way is faith. Just when I think I've got it down, something happens that makes me wonder if I've ever even had any faith at all or had any idea what it really is.

In 2018, in answer to a question of what I would like to be known for, I said "I want to be known as a woman of faith." On a visit to Johannesburg in 2019, I got prophesied

over by two separate people and both said "You will be known as a woman of faith." I was excited because it's what I've always wanted.

When the second person said it, I expressed my excitement and she said "I don't think you realise this but there's suffering that creates faith." I should have listened to her because since then I've had experiences that have made me wish I hadn't asked God to turn me into a woman of faith. I've sat down and said "It's ok Lord, I don't need to be an example of having faith, I'm fine with just being me, now please make it stop." All this in the hope that my circumstances would start to mirror the vision I have for my life. Alas, we're not there yet.

Throughout this period though, God has been kind enough to teach me more about faith and allow me to see it with new eyes. I've recently come to a point where I've discovered that

faith leads to peace. I started to experience peace as a result of faith after having gone through some difficult times. Now that I believe the bright future ahead of me I'm relaxed, knowing that it's a done deal and it's only a matter of time before I live in it. My circumstances haven't changed but my perception has and that has made all the difference.

I was talking to a friend about how much peace I was experiencing in my life. She asked how that came about and I told her it happened when I started to truly believe God's promises for my life and not doubt. Prior to that I thought I had faith but I was living in doubt without being aware of it. I started to explain to her my understanding of the connection between faith and peace and I found myself using an analogy I hadn't thought of before.



I explained to her that it's like giving in notice at work. You would have been dreading going to work. Wanting nothing but to leave. You just can't take another day in that place. You hand in your notice and suddenly everything's okay. You don't hate going to work anymore. You feel good about life. You're still at that job. Nothing has changed except how you feel about it. The knowledge that you're leaving, that it's a done deal, allows you to breathe easy. That's the peace that comes from faith.

Hebrews 11 verse 1 aptly puts it this way: "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." Because I'm so sure of what I'm hoping for, even though there is no evidence of it, I am still assured that it is on its way. I've handed in my notice from life as it stands and now simply serving notice until the new life that awaits me comes my way. I hope you can allow yourself to believe despite what your circumstances say and find peace as a result.

Contributors to the August 2021 issue

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