

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR A GREAT FUTURE

Chinaemerem Ibezim

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About The Author

*In loving memory of my late mother,
Pastor (Mrs.) Olusola Omolara Ibezim
(nee Kolawole)
June 23, 1958 - July 13, 2011*

Again, to everyone who believes in me; together we will get to the top and remain there.

PREFACE

Successful people do not wait for things to happen, they take charge of their lives and situations around them, and cause things to happen. Today, you can determine the kind of future that you want, you can plan for that future, and you can actually get to your desired destination.

See your life as a building. In life, people choose the kind of lives they want. Like a building, some choose to build bungalows, while some others choose to build skyscrapers. I like Donald Trump. He is one of the richest men in the world, and he has built some of the world's greatest buildings. He once said that it takes as long as thirty years to complete some buildings. Such tasks require diligence, patience, planning and attention to details. A very tall building requires a very deep and solid foundation, if you want a great future, you must begin now to lay a great foundation.

I am sure you have heard that youths are the leaders of tomorrow. Tomorrow's leaders will only be those who take charge of today and prepare themselves to lead tomorrow. If you want to lead tomorrow, you cannot continue to play today; you must be disciplined and prepare yourself for the challenges of the future.

The essence of this book is to help you lay the foundation for a great future. You can be among the top ten in any area of life that you choose to feature in. There will be many hurdles to run over in your quest to fulfill your dream but if you take the right steps and persist, victory, success and all you have ever dreamed of is certain.

Chinaemerem Joshua Ibezim

June 9, 2012

Umuahia, Abia State.

CHAPTER ONE

BELIEVE IN YOUR DREAM

As a little boy, I wanted to work in the bank. My decision was influenced by one of my dad's friends I used to see. I guess I liked his dressing. I was in school when my dad bought a JAMB form for me, and because they all knew what I had always wanted to do as at then, he applied for me to study Banking and Finance in Nnamdi Azikwe University Awka. I eventually did and today, I work in a bank!

You see, you can actually become whatever you want to be if you believe in your dreams. Eleanor Roosevelt said, "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." You must be sure of what you are here on earth for. Everyone is here for a definite reason. You are not here accidentally; you are not here because your parents decided to have you. The very fact that you were born and are still alive today is a sure indication that there is something very important that God wants you to accomplish. Find that purpose for your life and chase it relentlessly - your happiness depends on it.

You may not like your past, and you may be dissatisfied with your present. The good news is that you can begin today to have a new life! Your future does not have to be an extension of your past or your present. That is the beauty of life: our ability to have brand new lives! If you are willing to change your thoughts, your attitude and your actions, you will be able to have the future you desire.

Every one of us has the potential to become whatever we want to be. The problem is that we allow ourselves to be limited by what others think, what others say, and other external factors, such as the economy. A determined man can overcome any obstacles ahead of him. If you quit, you can't win. You will only fail if you stop trying. There are many stories of people who refused to be stopped by accidents, disabilities, losses and misfortunes.

All great things you see in the world today were achieved by men and women with great dreams, they were men and women like you, who believed in their dreams. Abraham Lincoln was the 16th President of the United State of America serving from March 1861 until he was assassinated in 1865. He is regarded as one of the three greatest Presidents of the United States today because he did not quit. He believed in his dream. He lost eight elections, failed twice in business and even suffered a nervous breakdown. He could have quit many times, but he did not, and because of that, we are still talking about him 147 years after his death.

In 1816, Lincoln's family was out forced out of their home. He had to work to support them. In 1818, his mother died. In 1831, he failed in business. In 1832, Abraham Lincoln ran for state legislature and lost. He lost his job in 1832, wanted to go to law school but could not get in. In 1833, he borrowed some money from a friend to begin business and by the end of the year, he was bankrupt! *He spent 17years of his life repaying that debt!* In 1835, Abraham Lincoln was engaged to be married; his fiancée died and his heart was broken. He had a total nervous breakdown and was in bed for six months in 1838 when he sought to become speaker of the state legislature.

If many of us were Abraham Lincoln, we would have given up after all the said dissappointments, defeats and losses, and abandoned our dreams - but not Abraham Lincoln. In 1840, he sought to become elector but lost again. In 1843, he ran for congress and lost again. He won in 1846; ran for re-election to congress in 1848 and lost. He sought for the job of land officer in his home state and was rejected in 1849. He lost again when he ran for senate in 1854. Got less than 100 votes when he sought the Vice Presidential nomination in 1856. In 1858, he ran for U.S. senate again and lost again! And then, in 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected president of the United States.

You call it set-backs; I call it pull-backs. If you must get there, don't stop until you get there. It is that simple! Arnold Schwarzenegger always said to his friend, "I'm going to become the greatest actor!" He dreamed of moving to the U.S. since the age of 10 and saw body building as the avenue through which to do so. He realized his dream by moving to the United States at the age of 21, speaking little

English. In 2002, LA weekly said Schwarzenegger is the most famous immigrant America “who overcame a thick Austrian accent and transcend the unlikely background of body building to become the biggest movie star in the world in the 1990.” Not only did he become the biggest movie star, he also become a Governor in America!

Don't be stopped by your age, colour, tribe or accent. Hold on to your dreams. People may misunderstand you, and say all manner of things against you; stay focused; don't quit. Always remember that you can be it if you can see it.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FUTURE IS HERE!

Many people procrastinate. They delay action until when they think they would be ready act. They base their inaction on the assumption that the future is five, or ten or twenty years from now. That's wrong. A year is made up of twelve months. A month is made up of 28, 30 or 31 days; a day is made up of hours and minutes, and a minute is made up of sixty seconds. The future is here already!

C.S. Lewis said, "The future is something which everyone reaches at the rate of 60 minutes an hour, whatever he does, whoever he is." TY Bello sang, "Goodbye yesterday, tomorrow is now for the taking, the future is here." When we were about to start working, many of us had dreams of where and what we wanted to be in five and ten years. But sad to say, it's "suddenly" five years and ten years now, and not much has changed. You shouldn't go on like that.

Have a plan and take the necessary steps to actualize your dreams. Brian Tracy wrote that "The most common quality of successful people is they are intensely action oriented". Success starts with a step. Action is the mother of success. Nothing happens until you make it happen. You cannot expect things to continue to happen accidentally and coincidentally if you truly want to succeed in life.

No matter how little and insignificant the step is, if it is geared toward the actualization of your goals, take it. If it is to pray, pray. If it is to read and graduate with flying colours, then read and graduate with flying colours so that you can have your dream job. If you have to further your education, start now. You have no control over time; only yourself.

It is okay to dream big, and plan big. But as they say, Rome was not built in a day. A mighty ocean consists of little drops of water. It is okay to start small. Don't despise little beginnings. Aliko Dangote is currently African's richest man and also the richest black person in the world, according to Forbes. He started a small

trading firm in 1977 with the money give to him by his uncle, Sani Dantata (N500,000.00). Dantata gave Aliko three years to repay the loan, but Aliko repaid the money in three months. Today, he is the richest black person in the world with a networth of \$11billion and his conglomerate is worth trillions of Naira.

Opportunities come to all men, but only those who are prepared for the opportunities grab them. That is what I am saying. Are you already developing the skills that you require to become what you wish to become? There are countless people who have been given over a million Naira but did nothing meaningful with it. People collect loans but fail to use them well. The simple reason is that there was no real plan; no strong dream, no burning desire to excel, and most importantly, they were not prepared for the opportunity.

You may not want to be a business man; maybe you want a job with a blue chip company. Are you preparing yourself for the tests and interviews? I wrote job tests without reading for them and passed. When I was invited for my very first interview by Zenith Bank, I felt I did not need to prepare for it. But I was wrong. During the interview, I did not answer the questions correctly, and I was not employed by Zenith Bank. After that experience, I went online studied as much as I could about interview questions and how to answer them; I also bought a book titled 200 Interview Questions, and got a friend to ask me questions as an interviewer. By the time I did a second interview by another bank, the two interviewers said the session was interesting and enlightening.

You see, that's how to achieve success in any endeavour. You've got to give it your best shot. Learn new things; attend courses and training programmes; don't assume you know it all; and most importantly, make a move! "The height attained by great men is not by sudden flight. For while their companions lay asleep, these men were toiling in the night." Anonymous

CHAPTER THREE

ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE

If you believe, you can become whatsoever you wish to become. It does not matter if you were born in an unknown Nigerian village or in the United States; it doesn't matter if you had a first class or if you dropped out of school, you can make it to the top! Jesus said, "Everything is possible for him who believes." Mark 9:23.

Helen Keller's story is enough to challenge anyone. Two years after she was born, she fell ill and was struck blind, deaf and dumb. Imagine someone with all three conditions. But with the help of her teacher, Anne Sullivan, Helen Keller went to college, graduated, and became one of the 20th century's humanitarians.

Today, we fly to the moon; we've been to space and we can get to very far distances in minutes and hours because we have planes and jets. But before the invention of the plane, it was thought that it was impossible to fly. People said that if God wanted man to fly. He would have given us wings. Do you know that even one of the inventors of the plane, Wilbur Wright, said in 1901, two years before they invented the plane, that man will not fly for 50 years? He was wrong.

People may not believe not believe in your dreams, but believe me, if you stay focused and hold on to your belief, you will achieve it. The British Parliament Committee in 1878 said Thomas Edison's light bulb was "unworthy of attention". Henry Morton, president of the Steven's Institute of Technology said in 1880 that it was a "conspicuous failure". But today, we have several kinds of bulbs because Thomas Edison believed that it was possible.

The President of the Michigan Savings Bank advised Henry Ford's lawyer not to invest in the Ford Motor Co. in 1903, saying that, "The horse is here to stay but the automobile is only a novelty, a fad". Today, we have all kinds of cars, because Henry Ford believed it was possible to have cars.

Today, we have computers, laptops, notebooks, of various shapes and sizes but once upon a time, Ken Olson said, “There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home.” Ken Olson was President, Chairman and Founder of Digital Equipment Corp., maker of big business mainframe computers.

Lord Kelvin, Scottish Mathematician and Physicist said, “Radio has no future”. He was very wrong. The New York Times said, “A rocket will never be able to leave the Earth’s atmosphere” in 1936. They too were wrong. Even Albert Einstein, in 1932, said that “There is not the slightest indication that nuclear energy will be obtainable”. He too was wrong.

Below are some other things that were said about some great inventions that happen to be false.

- “It’s a great invention but who would want to use it anyway?” Rutherford B. Hayes, U.S. President, after a demonstration of Alexander Bells telephone, in 1876.
- “Television won’t last. It’s a flash in the pan”. Mary Somerville, pioneer of radio educational broadcast 1948.
- “Television won’t last because people will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night”. Darryl Zanuck, a movie producer, 20th Century Fox, 1946.
- “Rail travel at high speed is not possible because passengers, unable to breathe, would die of asphyxia”. Dr. Dionysys Larder, Professor of Natural Philosophy and Astronomy, University College London (1793-1859)
- “X-rays will prove to be a hoax”. Lord Kelvin, President of the Royal Society, 1883.

I took time to state the above so that you will know that no one is too highly placed, too professional or too intelligent to tell you that something impossible because anything is possible. Even in this century, there’s still a lot more that we are yet to see! Right now, there’s no cure for HIV/AIDS, but very soon there will be a cure! People who believe that it is possible are working might and day to produce a cure.

Don't let anyone rain on your parade. And you too! Believe in yourself and in your ability to succeed! Don't allow fear and doubt halt your progress in life. I have seen a man without hands drive, cook and swim; I have seen a blind man repair computers; and I've read about great inventors who dared to actualize their dreams.

As Brian Tracy said, "If it is to be, it is up to you". If someone else believes in your dream and is willing to help that would be great; but if no one else sees what you see, you must resolve to pursue your dreams till they become realities.

CHAPTER FOUR

MAKE YOUR FUTURE BRIGHT

Like is like a deposit account, after a while, you will get what you put into it with some interest. In other words, you will reap what you sow; as you lay your bed, so you will lie on it. What this means is that you can determine how bright you want your future to be by doing what is required of you today to have the future of your dreams.

Many people dream of bright futures, but years later, they are disappointed when their dreams do not come true. Anyone can have a bright future; but it will not be achieved through luck; but through hardwork and excellence. Oprah Winfrey said, "When I look into the future, it is bright it burns my eyes." You too can have a bright future if you are willing to pay the price.

Oprah Winfrey was born into poverty in rural Mississippi to a teenage single mother. She experienced considerable hardship during her childhood; being raped at 9. The abuse, which lasted from the ages of 9 to 13, was emotionally devastating. When she tried to run away, she was sent to a juvenile detention home, only to be denied admission because all the beds were filled. At 14, she was out of the house and on her own. By her own account, she was sexually promiscuous as a teenager. After giving birth to a baby who died in infancy, she went to Nashville, Tennessee to live with her dad.

Her dad gave her the secured home life she needed. He required her to read a book and write a book report each week. In that environment, Oprah did well, and became an honour student, winning prizes for oratory and dramatic recitation. That was the beginning of her rise. At age 17, Oprah Winfrey won the Miss Black Tennessee Beauty pageant and was offered an on-air job at a radio station. She also won a full scholarship to Tennessee State University where she majored in speech communication and performing Arts. Oprah continued to work at the radio

station in her first years of college, but her broadcasting career was already taking off. She left school and signed on with a local television station as a reporter and anchor.

Through hardwork, excellence and passion, her second talk show AM Chicago was renamed The Oprah Winfrey show in 1985. Since then, Oprah has won several awards. In 1988, she established Harpo Studios, making her the third woman in the American entertainment industry to own her own studio. In the 20th century, Oprah was the richest black person in the world and is still said to be the most influential woman in the world. She got Barack Obama an estimated one million votes through her influence in 2008.

Margaret Fuller said, "Today a reader, tomorrow a leader". Thomas Carlyle said that the best effect of any book is that it excites the reader to self-activity. Knowledge is power and light, and those whose habit it is to read books are empowered to be the best in life. In this age, referred to as the information age, the person with relevant and useful information is king. But it's sad that many of our young today don't read. Little wonder we make insignificant progress.

Your ability to read is one of your greatest assets. You must make it a habit to read good books. If you can't buy, borrow: you can also get valuable information online. What reading does is that it enlightens you thus enabling you to make good decisions.

Another thing you must do to have a bright future is to continually strive for excellence in whatever you do, wherever you are. My motto is, "Anything worth doing is worth doing well." I would rather not do a thing than do a bad job. And to deliver excellent results, you must increase your capacity. Acquire new set of skills, attend trainings; learn from others who are better than you; think outside the box, and always think of how you can make things better than you met them.

You've got to be hardworking. My guiding scripture for work is Ecclesiastes 9:10. It says, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going." Dr. Thomas Stanley, the author of The Millionaire Next Door, reports that almost every one of

the self-made millionaires he interviewed told him that their success was due more to hard work than to any other factor. Brian Tracy said that “To achieve more than the average person, you must work longer and harder than the average person.”

Don't be lazy! The bible says that a little sleep and a little folding of arms will bring poverty. A time to rest will come, but like Jesus said, we must work while it is day. Now that we are strong and young, we must work with all our might to make our future bright. If you are a student, read hard. In my SS3, I determined to read just once for all my exams. I read and read; I didn't let anyone distract me. That year, I wrote and passed WAEC, NECO, JAMB and Poly Jamb examinations. I then had the option of choosing the school and course to attend and study.

I do a job that requires a lot of time, and yet I manage to write every day. People ask me how I am able to do all that – it is simple! I manage my time well. Most times I am up for most hours at midnight; I get to work very early and close late. It is a habit I have formed overtime. While in the university, it was once said that I was the only one who read till day break without sleeping.

The choice is yours. While you are free to make choices, please not that you are not free to determine the consequences. But by making the right choices, you can expect to have very good outcomes. You will definitely reap whatever you sow in this life; it is called the law of attraction, or the law of cause and effect. You are ultimately responsible for your life.

CHAPTER FIVE

MAKE WISE CHOICES NOW!

We all make mistakes; I have made many mistakes and I am sure that you can say same. As it is said, to err is human. But as much as we can, we must make wise choices else we would jeopardize our future. There abound many bright young people who have died, who have lost their jobs, who are in prisons, and who may never achieve their dreams because of something, or things they have already done. Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab is an example of a young man who jeopardized his bright future.

Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab is the youngest of 16 children to Alhaji Umar Mutallab, a Nigerian businessman who was described by The Times in 2009 as being “one of the richest men in Africa”, and a former Chairman of First Bank Nigeria and former Nigerian Federal Commission for Economic Development.

Abdulmutallab attended high school at the British International School in Lome, the capital of Togo, a popular private school in West Africa. His teacher, John McGuinness, described him as “incredibly polite and very hardworking”, while also noting his devotion to the Muslim Faith. Abdulmutallab was also described as a “dream student” by his history teacher, Michael Rimmer.

Abdulmutallab began his studies at University College London in September 2005, where he studied Engineering and Business Finance, and earned a degree in mechanical engineering in June 2008. From January until July 2009, he attended a master’s of international business degree programme at University of Wollongong in Dubai.

Given the vast opportunities he had, Abdulmutallab could have chosen to rise as high as he could in life. After his MBA, he could have come back to Nigeria, where his likes enjoy preferential treatments. But from childhood, Abdulmutallab had begun taking the wrong path. In October 2009, Abdulmutallab sent a text to his

father saying that he was no longer interested in pursuing an MBA degree in Dubai, and wanted to study Sharia and Arabic in a seven-year course in Yemen. Among the other text messages he sent to his father were: "I've found a new religion, the real Islam"; "You should just forget about me, I'm never coming back"; "Please forgive me. I will no longer be in touch with you"; and "Forgive me for any wrong doing, I am no longer your child".

On December 25, 2009, Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab attempted to detonate plastic explosives hidden in his underwear while on board Northwest Airlines Flight 253, enroute from Amsterdam to Detroit, Michigan. He was convicted of eight criminal counts, including attempted use of a weapon of mass destruction and attempted murder of 289 people. On February 16, 2012 he was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole by a U.S. federal court. He is 25 years old.

Abdulmutallab, was probably influenced by his peers. King Solomon wrote, "My son, if sinner entice thee, consent thou not". As a youth, people will attempt to lure you into joining them to do shady things. You might even be attracted to their way of life because of their nice clothes and flashy cars. You must choose to remain focused and refrain from every illegal and unethical activity.

Be patient. "All great achievements require time", says Maya Angelou. You can make it without joining a cult; you can make it without stealing and cheating; you can make it without engaging in advanced fee fraud (419); you can make it without engaging in "yahoo yahoo" or scam; ladies, you can make it without engaging in prostitution; you can make it without having sugar daddies. Yes, you can!

All you need is an idea, proper guidance, passion and a willingness to work hard. The founder of Facebook, Mark Zuckerberg, is only 28 years and he is already one of the richest men in the world. You may not be as big as Mark immediately, but you can always start from somewhere and gradually attain great heights. I've got two friends I admire because of their passion and industry, Vera Akporeha and Nonye Ibeh. Vera just graduated from University of Port Harcourt. She has a fashion label named VNC (Vera Nora Couture). She makes clothes, bag, etc and

recently displayed her designs at Fashion Glamour Runway Show in Port Harcourt. She's in her early twenties. Nonye just completed the mandatory National Youth Service and is already a registered business owner, selling hairs, table water and few other things. Trust me, she's doing well.

Make wise choices now! You are talented. All you need to do is to channel your energy in the right direction. You've got great potential, and with a little refining the sky will be your springboard. It doesn't matter what your past has been; it doesn't matter where you are now or what you are doing, you can start now to lay the foundation for a great future.

CHAPTER SIX

SOMETHING TO LEAN ON

During the National Service year in Ekparakwa, Oruk Anam L.G.A. of Akwa Ibom State, I asked a paramount ruler of one village for advice on how youths like us could attain success in life. He said to us, "Live a clean life, and always have something to lean on". Many of us have realized our need for support, but we often choose to lean on those who cannot really help us.

While it is okay to identify with people we consider as role models and mentors our greatest support comes from God. Here's what Armstrong Williams said, "A belief in God helps provide a foundation to arbitrate our decisions. Without this foundation, we are condemned to live essentially formless lives."

Many people start life thinking they can make it without God. Well, the strongest, richest and most powerful have always acknowledged the help of God. On her last show, Talk Show host, Oprah Winfrey thanked Jesus for a successful career.

Only God can guarantee a bright future, we can only try. It is only God that sees the end from the beginning; only God knows the path that we should take. He made us and it is Him that gave us our individual assignments. A song says, "Many things abound tomorrow, I don't seem to understand, but I know who knows tomorrow and I know he holds my life."

Many people have overcome defeats and failures by simply believing in God. When the going gets tough and it seems that you have gotten to the end of the road, if God is with you, everything will be alright. God never fails; He is always there whenever we need Him. Even when we make mistakes, He helps us correct them. In Him there is always hope for a brighter tomorrow. Christ in you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27).

Life is not only physical, it is also spiritual. There are unseen forces working tirelessly to ensure that you and I fail woefully. But in God, victory is certain. I chose long ago to lean on God, and I can testify that He has never failed me. Even when I failed Him, He never walked away from me. He is taking me from one level of glory to glory; He keeps opening new doors for me; He makes ways where there are none; He sees me through crisis - I have proved Him to be faithful.

The surest foundations of life are a result of trusting the Lord. Psalm 125:1 says, "Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever." In the course of life there will be storms and trials, but those who have put their trust in God will be safe.

We have all heard of Mary Kay. Mary Kay Ash was an American businesswoman and founder of Mary Kay Cosmetics, Inc. Her slogan was, "God first, family second, career third". Fortune magazine recognized Mary Kay Inc. with inclusion in "The 100 best companies to work for in America". The company was also named one of the best 10 companies for women to work. At the time of her death, Mary Kay Cosmetics had over 800,000 representatives in 37 countries, with total annual sales over \$2 billion at retail. As of 2008, Mary Kay Cosmetics had more than 1.7 million consultants worldwide and wholesale volume in excess of \$2.2 billion. Mary Kay herself was honored as leading female entrepreneur in American history. Mary Kay Ash authored three books, all of which became best-sellers. Her autobiography, *Mary Kay*, has sold more than a million copies and appears in several languages. Mary Kay Ash's third book, *You Can Have It All*, was launched in August 1995 and received "best-seller" status within days of its introduction.

Psalm 34:5 (Aramaic Bible in Plain English) says, "Gaze unto him and hope in him, and your faces will not be disappointed." A life built on Christ is bound to do well. Joining an occultic group may give success, but it is only for a while. Leaning on corrupt practices to make money comes with consequences. But the blessings of God make rich, and it is riches without sorrow.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE DONKEY IN THE WELL

“One day a farmer’s donkey fell down into a well. The animal cried piteously for hours as the farmer tried to figure out what to do. Finally he decided the animal was old and the well needed to be covered up anyway, it just wasn’t worth it to retrieve the donkey.

He invited all his neighbors to come over and help him. They all grabbed a shovel and began to shovel dirt into the well. At first, the donkey realized what was happening and cried horribly. Then, to everyone’s amazement, he quieted down.

A few shovel loads later, the farmer finally looked down the well and was astonished at what he saw. With every shovel of dirt that hit his back, the donkey was doing something amazing. He would shake it off and take a step up. As the farmer’s neighbors continued to shovel dirt on top of the animal, he would shake it off and take a step up.

Pretty soon, everyone was amazed as the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and trotted off.”

David Brinkley said, “A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him.” In life, as you grow, there will be mistakes, there will be disappointments, there will be betrayals, failures and heartbreaks. At such times, remember the story of the donkey in the well. Learn from those experiences and refuse to be buried by them.

True strength is measured by how long a man is able to persevere. Attitude is everything. Here’s a fact: not every one will like you, not every one will want you to succeed. But you can either choose to co-operate with them by letting them stop you, by letting them kill your dreams, and by letting them hinder your progress, or you can choose to use their criticisms and attacks to fuel your passion.

Refuse to be stopped! Not even a disability can stop you if you determine not to be stopped. When they say that you can't, tell yourself that you can. In you is an unlimited amount of energy to accomplish your dreams: you must unleash your potentials. After my first interview, the man said to me, "Young man, you are intelligent, but you should go back to school. You are not ready to work." The lady said I wasn't focused simply because I said I can do anything, when she asked me what I could do. Never did their words affect me: till today, I still know that I can do all things!

Believe in yourself. Determine to succeed.

In 1883, a creative engineer named John Roebling was inspired by an idea to build a spectacular bridge connecting New York with the Long Island. However bridge building experts throughout the world thought that this was an impossible feat and told Roebling to forget the idea. It just could not be done. It was not practical. It had never been done before.

Roebling could not ignore the vision he had in his mind of this bridge. He thought about it all the time and he knew deep in his heart that it could be done. He just had to share the dream with someone else. After much discussion and persuasion he managed to convince his son Washington, an up and coming engineer, that the bridge in fact could be built.

Working together for the first time, the father and son developed concepts of how it could be accomplished and how the obstacles could be overcome. With great excitement and inspiration, and the headiness of a wild challenge before them, they hired their crew and began to build their dream bridge.

The project started well, but when it was only a few months underway a tragic accident on the site took the life of John Roebling. Washington was injured and left with a certain amount of brain damage, which resulted in him not being able to walk or talk or even move.

"We told them so."

"Crazy men and their crazy dreams."

"It's foolish to chase wild visions."

Everyone had a negative comment to make and felt that the project should be scrapped since the Roeblings were the only ones who knew how the bridge could be built. In spite of his handicap Washington was never discouraged and still had a burning desire to complete the bridge and his mind was still as sharp as ever.

He tried to inspire and pass on his enthusiasm to some of his friends, but they were too daunted by the task. As he lay on his bed in his hospital room, with the sunlight streaming through the windows, a gentle breeze blew the flimsy white curtains apart and he was able to see the sky and the tops of the trees outside for just a moment.

It seemed that there was a message for him not to give up. Suddenly an idea hit him. All he could do was move one finger and he decided to make the best use of it. By moving this, he slowly developed a code of communication with his wife.

He touched his wife's arm with that finger, indicating to her that he wanted her to call the engineers again. Then he used the same method of tapping her arm to tell the engineers what to do. It seemed foolish but the project was under way again.

For 13 years Washington tapped out his instructions with his finger on his wife's arm, until the bridge was finally completed. Today the spectacular Brooklyn Bridge stands in all its glory as a tribute to the triumph of one man's indomitable spirit and his determination not to be defeated by circumstances. It is also a tribute to the engineers and their team work, and to their faith in a man who was considered mad by half the world. It stands too as a tangible monument to the love and devotion of his wife who for 13 long years patiently decoded the messages of her husband and told the engineers what to do.

You can have a great future. You can. Yes, you can! I believe in you and so does God.

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