



HOPE K. FIADJOE
(B. Pharm, MPhil, MPSGH)

MAKING THE MOST
OF YOUR
TERTIARY
EDUCATION



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You can reach the author on the following

Tel.: (233) 265 788 298

Email: hfiadjoe@yahoo.com

Published by LiteMedya

Tel: +233 543 989 662, +233 206 025 880

Email: litemedya@gmail.com

Dedication

I specially dedicate this book to
my youngest sister- **Gladys Fiadjoe**
&
all students who are currently pursuing tertiary
education.

Write a better story than ours.

Acknowledgment

I am grateful to:

God –the Father of my Lord Jesus Christ – for His unfailing love and grace towards me.

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Why I Wrote This Book

The inspiration behind this book largely stems from the notes I used to guide first-year students in our campus ministry during 2012 and 2015. Recognizing the immense value of these notes, I felt compelled to transform them into a more lasting and accessible resource, surpassing the limitations of mere verbal transmission. My goal is to provide an easy-to-use reference guide that can benefit students throughout their time in school and beyond.

Education is a topic that truly ignites my passion, and I am dedicated to witnessing many individuals excel in their academic pursuits.

Within this book, I have compiled a set of general principles that aim to equip first-year students with the tools they need to thrive at the tertiary level. Furthermore, continuing students will discover valuable insights that can prove beneficial during their remaining years of study.

My ultimate aspiration is that this book will serve as a powerful tool, empowering you to make the most of your time at the tertiary level and beyond.

01

THE NEED FOR PROPER ORIENTATION

Pursuing tertiary education is undoubtedly one of the best decisions you can make. Among the many benefits it offers, it enhances your earning potential and opens up a wide array of career opportunities that might not be readily available without advancing to the tertiary level. Investing in your tertiary education is a wise and valuable choice.

However, it is crucial to address some misconceptions that many young people have

about university life. Often influenced by portrayals in movies and on television, they enter tertiary institutions with unrealistic expectations of endless fun, pleasure, and leisure. The truth is far from the media's portrayal; the reality of tertiary life is much more complex and demanding.

Even advice from well-meaning seniors who claim that the real challenges are in high school, while university life is all about enjoyment, can lead to misguided assumptions. Such incomplete stories and misinformation can cause significant surprises and difficulties when confronted with the actual challenges of tertiary life.

Additionally, some students may arrive at the tertiary level with prior experiences from polytechnics or training colleges. While these experiences are valuable, the university's standards and demands are distinct and require a different approach.

The key to navigating this new academic phase successfully is proper orientation. Recognizing that the tertiary level is more advanced and demanding, an orientation equips students with the right mindset and attitude toward their education, saving them from unnecessary heartaches and disappointments. Proper orientation is also the key to embracing the opportunities and responsibilities that come with higher education.

02

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

Who among us does not know why they are in school? The seemingly elementary question, “Why are you here?” may surprise you with how many individuals are genuinely uncertain and lack a clear, concise answer. So, why have you enrolled in tertiary education?

Understanding the “why” behind our actions is crucial for achieving successful outcomes. Your answers to the question, “Why are you here?” will shape the opportunities you pursue, the level of commitment to learning, and ultimately, how

you respond to the challenges along the way. herefore, addressing this fundamental question about your presence in tertiary school is paramount.

You may have several reasons for enrolling in tertiary education, such as:

- Acquiring new knowledge
- Meeting new people
- Gaining new experiences
- Finding a life partner
- Seeking independence
- Obtaining qualifications for career change or promotion
- Earning the prestige of being called a graduate
- Pursuing your dream profession
- Fulfilling the expectations of friends and family
- Improving your earning potential after graduation

All of these reasons are valid and meaningful. However, amid the various motivations, I believe two stand out as of utmost importance:

1. To be prepared for your career
2. To be prepared for life

The lectures, assignments, projects, fieldworks, laboratory sessions, and encounters with various people throughout your schooling journey are all geared towards equipping you with the knowledge and skills needed for your future career. Even in cases where you may initially think that your course is unrelated to your desired career, you'll likely discover that the training still contributes to your overall preparation.

Beyond career training, your tertiary education also plays a pivotal role in preparing you for life in general. It nurtures and shapes you into a responsible and valuable member of society. Through basic knowledge and essential skills, your education empowers you to make meaningful contributions to your community and the world.

Amid the multitude of reasons that led you to pursue tertiary education, consider the profound significance of preparing for your future career and life as some of the strongest reasons driving your journey.

03

THE NEED FOR THE RIGHT MOTIVATION

Having addressed the primary reason for your education – to prepare you for your future career and life – it is essential to examine the motivations behind the achievements you seek. This entails asking yourself a series of “why questions”:

- What motivates you to pursue your goals?
- Why do you aspire to accomplish all that you dream of during and after school?
- Why have you chosen your dream course?

- Why do you desire good grades?
- Why do you aim to earn more money?

Reflecting on my own experience, when I entered university, one of my main motivations was to prove that I would not be a failure. I wanted to disprove the doubts others had about my education and show them that their skepticism would be proven wrong. However, this motivation eventually placed significant pressure on me. Even minor setbacks felt like major personal failures, and I began to tilt toward the negative prophecies of those I sought to challenge.

Upon prayerful reflection, I gained wisdom into the root cause of my problem – my motivation was flawed from the start. I then made a crucial decision to shift my focus and find true motivation in bringing glory to God through my education. Instead of seeking to prove myself to others or fulfilling personal ambitions, I realized that all my pursuits should aim to glorify God. This simple shift in motivation brought about transformative changes in the rest of my academic journey.

Later on, I learned from Pastor Wayne Cordeiro that our motivation is like the fuel in a car engine. Bad fuel can burn brightly and rapidly but eventually destroy the engine. Similarly, a wrong motivation behind your education may drive you to push hard initially but could lead to detrimental consequences in the long run.

Motivations such as ending poverty in your family, making your parents proud, outsmarting friends, or gaining advantageous positions in life can create anxiety and pressure that are unsustainable when faced with challenges.

In the story of Johann Sebastian Bach, the 18th-century composer and musician, Professor Michael Zigarelli shares that Bach's motivation for his exceptional performances was encapsulated in three Latin words – S.D.G., which stands for SOLI DEO GLORIA, meaning “to the glory of God alone.” Bach's aspiration was that his music would point toward God. I pray that SOLI DEO GLORIA will become the driving force behind your pursuits as well. When your motivation is

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centered on bringing glory to God, it not only benefits others but also grants you the fulfillment of achieving your goals. With God at the center, all other things fall into place and are achieved as well.

04

WHAT YOU SHOULD REALLY ACHIEVE AT THE END

For any journey, knowing both the starting point and the destination is crucial. As mentioned earlier, your education should serve as preparation for your future career and life, a destination that is actually a lifelong pursuit. But what does this really mean, and how can you determine whether you are genuinely being prepared for your career and life?

Let's explore.

Upon completing your tertiary education, you are expected to acquire two sets of skills – SPECIFIC (specialized) SKILLS and GENERAL (generic) SKILLS. Different authors may refer to them as employable skills, soft and technical skills, or other descriptions, but the underlying concept remains the same.

Specialized skills are those that are unique and exclusive to your chosen profession. For example, a Pharmacist must possess knowledge of various medicines, including their appropriate administration, and understanding their potential side effects. These competencies are the core skills required for the pharmacy profession, and every pharmacy graduate is expected to be proficient in them.

On the other hand, generic skills encompass a collection of general abilities that every graduate, regardless of their profession, should possess. Upon completing tertiary education, you are expected to be proficient in these skills. They include the ability to read, write, speak effectively,

manage tasks, and think critically, among others.

As a graduate, you should be able to:

- Read and analyze large volumes of information.
- Write effectively for various settings, including formal notes, essays, letters, reports, and briefs.
- Speak confidently during formal presentations, group discussions, and gatherings.
- Listen attentively to instructions and respond appropriately.
- Manage your time, finances, emotions, reactions, and decisions effectively.
- Lead a team towards achieving a common goal, demonstrating strong interpersonal skills.
- Think critically, evaluate ideas and arguments, and make informed decisions based on this analysis.
- Identify and provide solutions to individual and organizational problems.
- Collaborate with others in a team to achieve shared objectives.

- Possess a basic understanding of information technology and essential software.

Employers actively seek individuals with these skill sets when hiring, and they remain valuable even if you decide to start your own business.

While there may be some overlap between specific and general skills, both sets are not mastered in a day. However, your time at the tertiary institution marks the beginning of your journey towards growth and development in these abilities and skills. In the following sections, I will provide tips on how to acquire and enhance them.

05

THE JOURNEY IS NOT ALL ROSY

I wish I could say that the journey through tertiary education will be smooth, but more often than not, it presents its challenges. After just one semester at the university, I already felt tired and exhausted. I realized that many things were unfamiliar, and I had to learn new ways of approaching assignments and studying.

Different lecturers had varying preferences for solving questions, and I had to adapt to their

methods to avoid losing marks. It became evident that success at the tertiary level required several adjustments. Your willingness to adapt to the new demands will be one of the best things you can do. Techniques and lifestyles that may have worked previously might not be as effective here.

I remember hearing stories from fellow students who excelled in high school by cramming before exams, only to find that approach ineffective at the university. Others had to alter their sleep schedules to meet the demands of university life. Similarly, some mature classmates who had excelled at the polytechnic found themselves struggling academically upon returning to the university after a few years of work experience. This is to stress that tertiary education often demands necessary adjustments. It is a new environment with different ways of doing things.

You may need to improve on your diligent study habits that got you to this stage in the first place. Don't fall into the misconception that the tertiary level is a place to relax and have a good

time. The higher you go, the more demanding it becomes. Prepare yourself for hard work and learning new approaches to various tasks.

Tim Elmore, a notable author, uses a tollbooth and a roadblock as images to illustrate how to respond to challenges. A tollbooth is a place where you pay a price but continue your journey, whereas a roadblock stops you from moving forward. See the challenges you encounter as tollbooths – opportunities to overcome obstacles and grow, not roadblocks that halt your progress.

Disappointments and failed expectations are inevitable, both on major and minor issues. Embrace them as learning experiences. Criticizing yourself harshly for every setback will only deepen the wounds. Failure is not the enemy; it is a stepping stone to improvement. If you are accustomed to flawless victories, facing challenges may seem like a daunting mountain. Embrace the journey, with its ups and downs, as part of your growth and learning experiences. Enjoy every aspect of it, as each segment contributes to your personal development.

06

LIKELY CHALLENGES MANY FACE HERE

The list below, although not exhaustive, highlights some of the challenges most students face at the tertiary level:

- Lack of interest in the course of study
- Poor academic grades or failed courses
- Struggling to adjust to the demands of the program
- Problems with roommates
- Health challenges
- Financial issues

- Family challenges
- Relationship (Friendship, Dating, and Courtship) issues

Here is my general advice to address these challenges:

1. Identify the problem:

Acknowledge and examine the challenges you are facing. Refuse to live in denial and admit what is troubling you. Clear identification is the first step towards finding meaningful solutions.

2. Pray and study about it:

God has the solution to every problem. Seek guidance and strength from God through prayer. Study the Bible or relevant materials that address your specific issues. Look for encouragement and wisdom in similar situations.

3. Talk to people who can help:

Don't hesitate to discuss your challenges with people who can offer assistance – counseling services on campus, campus patrons, academic

tutors, or mature friends. Seeking help is not a sign of weakness but a step towards growth and improvement. I have had the privilege to counsel students who were struggling with the loss of interest, loss of energy to continue, and poor and stagnant academic performances. Within one semester, I saw them improve after just a brief session with them and a few follow-ups. I don't underestimate the power of seeking help from those who have gone ahead.

4. Be willing to make necessary adjustments:

Act on the advice received from prayer, study, or counseling. Implement the necessary changes to address your present challenges, even if it requires making personal sacrifices or altering your habits. To address their challenges, some students decided to:

- Sell petty things on campus
- Work part-time in some junior staff slots.
- Search and apply for some scholarships.
- Adjust their sleeping time
- Spend more hours studying than they did previously

- Take some weekends off campus to go home and relax
- Involve third parties to address roommate challenges
- Tolerate roommate's immature conduct.
- Eat more healthily
- Change friends
- Make new friends
- See a pastor of their local church for counseling
- Read through topics to be studied the next semester, during the vacation, before the semester resumes.
- Reduce active involvement in their personally owned businesses to concentrate on their studies for the time being.
- Forgive offenses done against them and move on.

These experiences, both pleasant and unpleasant, contribute to the development of the generic skills mentioned earlier:

- People skills and conflict resolution: From roommate issues or failed relationships.
- Reading, writing, and resilience: Learning from poor academic performances.
- Resource management: Addressing financial challenges and finding solutions.

All these will prepare you for life and career, as these are the core goals of tertiary education.

An analogy illustrates how to respond to challenges: Be like coffee, changing for the better when faced with boiling water, instead of becoming weak like a carrot or hardened like an egg. Let every event change you for the better.

Emulate the eagle's response to storms – soar above the challenges instead of hiding. Face challenges with courage, as those who do are often rewarded for their efforts. This attitude will be a key to success throughout your life.

Read and remember these verses to remind yourself that God can bring good results out of any situation:

- **Romans 8:28** - *And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*
- **Romans 8:18** - *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*
- **Romans 5:3-4** - *And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.*

07

YOU NEED GOD

During the freshers' talk in 2015, I emphasized the significance of God's involvement in academic success. Your relationship with God plays a vital role in excelling in your schoolwork as He provides life, strength, and guidance.

For years, I dedicated time every Sunday to pray specifically for my schoolwork. I sought wisdom, knowledge, and understanding from God, and I asked Him to bring people into my life who would support my academic success. When I entered

the university, I continued this practice, praying for guidance and wisdom before each semester and examination period. Additionally, my family fasted and prayed for me during most examination periods, supplementing their regular prayers for me on a daily basis. I can confidently say that this partnership with God had a positive impact on my academic journey.

However, I've noticed that some people misinterpret the role of God in academic success, falling into two extremes as described by Pastor Rick Warren: Practical humanism and Pious irresponsibility.

Practical humanism adopts the belief that success solely depends on personal efforts and hard work. While hard work is essential, it has its limitations and may not suffice in certain challenging situations.

On the other hand, pious irresponsibility adopts the belief that everything depends solely on God, and human effort is unnecessary. This perspective

is also flawed as God does not endorse laziness and irresponsibility.

What I want to encourage is a divine partnership – a synergy of human effort and God’s involvement. You should give your best in everything you do, utilizing your knowledge and abilities, while also relying on God for strength, wisdom, guidance, favor, and all divine virtues. God will enable you, but you must actively participate in the process.

A harmonious combination of divine enablement and human involvement is the key to academic success. Count on God’s support as you work diligently, never neglecting either aspect of this divine partnership.

08

YOU NEED OTHERS

During your tertiary journey, you will undoubtedly need the support and assistance of others. This includes the encouragement of your family, the camaraderie of friends, the guidance of senior colleagues, and the influence of various individuals you encounter along the way.

In school, aside from lecturers, I found seniors and course mates to be pivotal figures for success.

SENIORS

When I was in senior high school, I had the privilege of being mentored by a senior who imparted valuable insights on learning and excelling in examinations, which no book had ever taught me before. This mentorship played a significant role in my success during that period.

Upon entering the university, I initially tried to navigate my program of study on my own, but I soon realized the limits of my knowledge and abilities. God instructed me after a time of prayer and Bible reading, to go back to this principle - mentorship by a senior colleague. That's when I sought guidance from a senior colleague who was two years ahead of me in Pharmacy school and was also part of our campus fellowship. His advice and wisdom proved invaluable.

He taught me how to approach my courses, gave me insight into the demands of each semester, and even shared some of his past mistakes to help me avoid them. He stressed the importance of dedicating more effort to high-credit-hour courses

and advised me to score my best in those areas. Additionally, he provided his previous handouts, educated me on likely examination areas, and shared tips on how to excel in various lecturers' examinations.

My interaction with him led me to gather essential tips:

- Some lecturers modify their past questions, so it's crucial to review them thoroughly.
- Some ignore aspects of their handouts and base most questions on the notes they provide during teaching – attending their classes and taking note of these points is essential.
- Some set questions from specific textbooks – utilizing those textbooks in your studies is recommended.
- Some set questions from assignments they never collected – finding answers to these assignments can be beneficial.
- Some set a majority of their questions from unexpected parts of their handouts.

- Others are unpredictable, so it's best to prepare for everything and anything.

You won't be aware of these insights unless you seek advice from someone ahead of you. I wish I had reached out to him earlier, as his guidance proved to be invaluable during my time at the university. If you have a senior who is willing to help, consider them an essential part of your journey. If you haven't found one yet, I encourage you to seek out a mentor among your seniors.

COURSE MATES-

Regarding course mates, I used to be more reserved and preferred to study alone, thinking that collaboration with others would distract me from concentrating on my studies. I love people but I enjoy being alone most of the time because too much interaction with people drains me emotionally. However, I discovered the significance of my course mates' input during my university days. When I opened up to them, I realized the tremendous benefits of collaborating with them.

Some of my course mates sought my help, and I gladly offered my assistance. Others, however, waited until the last minute to approach me for explanations and solutions to their questions. Despite the minor inconveniences, I learned that their contributions outweighed any trouble they may have caused.

Creating a study group with some of my course mates was a game-changer. We shared the workload of our courses and assignments, saving us a lot of time. The diverse perspectives and findings they brought to our discussions shed light on concepts I would have otherwise overlooked. They effortlessly explained challenging topics, leaving me amazed at their knowledge. I believe that without their contributions, my academic achievements would not have been as substantial.

Each member of our study group possessed unique talents that complemented our collective efforts. We focused on solving past questions, discussing challenging areas, and predicting likely questions that might appear in exams, which proved to be an effective approach.

Apart from the academic aspect, some of my course mates became my close friends. We shared our challenges, borrowed money from each other, shared meals, and prayed together. We provided mutual encouragement during tough times. Moreover, beyond my immediate course mates, I made healthy friendships with fellow students in the halls and hostels, as well as in our campus fellowship, and they also offered support in various ways.

Collaboration and partnership with others can be immensely helpful. Don't hesitate to open up to those who can provide assistance, and be willing to offer help when others seek it from you.

By forming meaningful connections and engaging with your peers, you'll discover that success in your tertiary journey becomes more achievable and fulfilling.

09

YOUR BEST WILL BE REQUIRED

Aside from the valuable input from others, such as seniors and course mates, the majority of the effort required to successfully complete your tertiary education will depend on you. Developing a robust schedule for personal studies is the key to academic excellence. Without the discipline of personal studies, progress will be limited.

R. Kent Hughes, a Christian author, emphasizes the importance of discipline in various aspects of life, including academics. Discipline is the key to

excelling in any field of endeavor, whether it be the arts, business, athletics, or academics. There are no shortcuts or lazy ways to achieve success; you must be willing to invest the necessary time and effort to understand the various aspects of your program of study. Remember, the discipline to study and improve yourself year after year is paramount.

During my time in school, I attended a first-year orientation event, where I learned the M.A.S.T.E.R. approach to learning. Over time, I have refined and expanded upon this approach, and it can be broken down as follows:

M - Motivation:

Having a strong motivation and genuine interest in your studies will drive you to give your best effort. Find ways to keep yourself motivated, and engage in activities that energize you rather than drain you. Each individual has unique ways to stay motivated, and discovering what works best for you will be crucial to your success.

In 2012, while teaching this approach, a colleague shared with me that she began playing a motivating song before every study session. From that day onward, she noticed a significant improvement in her desire to study and her commitment to giving her best effort. As for myself, I discovered that spending quiet time with my Bible and listening to uplifting songs and sermons really energized me, providing the strength I needed to persevere.

On the contrary, unresolved petty issues, striving to meet unclear or unrealistic expectations, engaging in activities that expose my weaknesses rather than leveraging my strengths, and shouldering responsibilities neglected by others gradually drained me both physically and emotionally. To counteract these draining activities, I made a conscious effort to increase the activities that energized me.

Additionally, I motivated myself by reminding myself that undergoing these new processes would ultimately lead to personal growth and reap rewarding results.

A - Acquire the knowledge or information:

Identify your preferred learning style, be it visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, and utilize it to acquire and retain knowledge effectively.

Visual learners excel in their learning when presented with visual aids such as flashcards, graphs, pictures, drawings, diagrams, and charts. When information is displayed in these visual formats, they are able to retain it more easily and at a faster pace. On the other hand, auditory learners prefer they hear or listen to information. They learn best through verbal presentations, engaging in discussions, reading their notes aloud, repeatedly listening to recordings, or even participating in oral quizzes with others.

For kinesthetic learners, their optimal learning experience comes through hands-on experiences. They prefer to physically engage with the subject matter by touching, moving, or actively participating in practical tasks. Hands-on demonstrations, laboratory projects, and drama activities are particularly effective for their learning style.

Whether it's through visual aids, listening to recordings, or hands-on experiences, use the learning style(s) that suits you best.

S - Search for the meaning:

Understanding the meanings of keywords and terms is fundamental to comprehending your course material. Improve your vocabulary by learning new words regularly and familiarize yourself with the terminologies relevant to your field of study. This will enhance your ability to express yourself eloquently in writing and speech. Additionally, I realized that having a comprehensive grasp of how specific vital devices and equipment function in any domain is of utmost importance.

T - Translate notes into easily understandable forms:

Don't just study your notes as they are; create personalized summaries, concept maps, mnemonics, or acrostics to help you better understand and remember key concepts. These aids will prove invaluable during revision and examination periods. As the exam period

approaches, the abundance of numerous and hefty handouts may become overwhelming to finish. However, the summaries you've prepared will prove invaluable in making things more manageable for you.

E - Express what you have learned:

Test yourself with questions, whether from past exams or self-made ones, to gauge your understanding. Teaching others can also solidify your knowledge and reveal areas that need further improvement. Focus on retaining a substantial portion of what you study, rather than merely skimming through numerous pages of notes that you won't be able to recall later. During self-testing, consistently gauge how closely your answers align with the model answers. Regularly testing yourself and expressing what you have learned will help reinforce your understanding and retention of the material.

R - Reflect on learning experiences:

Take time to reflect on your learning journey, identifying what methods work best for you, the

most effective study times, and areas of progress or challenges. I heard this profound statement: “Even God, during His creation process, looked back and said, ‘This is good, and this is not good (for a man to be alone).’ Throughout your educational journey, take time to reflect on what’s working well and what’s not.

- How do you learn best?
- Which time of the day is most productive for you?
- Which aspects of your studies are showing improvement?
- Which approach was more beneficial for you - studying after the lecturer introduced the topic or reading before class?
- What do you need to cut down on or improve?
- What were the areas that posed challenges?
- What areas showed progress?

Interestingly, certain ideas may be helpful and effective for others but might not be the best fit for you. Through reflection on your learning

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experiences, you can identify and address your weaknesses while maximizing your strengths. This self-awareness will ultimately lead to better learning outcomes.

Giving your best effort is essential throughout your academic journey. By following the M.A.S.T.E.R. approach to learning and maintaining discipline in your studies, you can achieve academic excellence and make the most of your tertiary education.

10

ASIDE FROM YOUR REGULAR CLASSROOM WORK

In his book, *8 Laws of Leadership*, Pastor Elmer Towns wrote

‘To be great:

- Read great books
- Visit great places
- Attend great events
- Meet great people.

Life lessons extend beyond the confines of classroom learning. Embracing a broader perspective, and actively engaging in reading great books, exploring new places, attending events, and connecting with inspiring individuals can lead to personal and professional growth.

Life's journey is vast, and the pursuit of knowledge, experiences, and personal development will undoubtedly contribute to a fulfilling and successful life.

Here are the recommended strategies:

1. Read Great Books:

Invest in Christian and motivational books to gain wisdom and knowledge in various aspects of life, including effective learning techniques, exam preparation, and personal development.

2. Utilize Learning Resources:

Take advantage of the available learning resources on campus, such as YouTube videos, audios, e-books, and high-speed internet

services, to enhance your understanding of different subjects and life skills.

3. Be Discerning with Information:

Evaluate the ideas presented in the books and resources you read, keeping only what aligns with truth and wisdom. I Thessalonians 5:21 advises to *“test all things; hold fast what is good.”*

4. Make the Most of Vacations:

Use your vacations for attachments, training, and field trips to gain practical experiences and bridge the gap between theory and practice in your field of study. I began to appreciate the classroom work better after my first vacation training. Remembering and pronouncing the names of medicines that initially puzzled me improved after that.

5. Volunteer and Gain Skills:

Consider volunteering during vacations to develop employable skills at minimal cost. Volunteering can open doors to job opportunities and enhance your resume or Curriculum

Vitae. It was inspiring to hear about a friend's experience and how volunteering during his undergraduate days led to securing a job with an international agency. This anecdote underscores the significance of seizing opportunities for personal and professional development outside of formal education.

6. Engage in Campus Events:

Participate in events organized by your professional association, campus fellowship, and social groups. Campus is a vibrant hub where a multitude of great events take place, covering diverse areas such as business, academics, spirituality, athletics, and more. These events offer valuable learning opportunities and exposure to renowned individuals who can share their expertise and wisdom.

These events can be instrumental in experiencing liberation from spiritual obstacles and physical ailments, discovering a deeper connection with their faith, renewing a sense of purpose, and finding inspiration to embark on new projects

and ventures they might not have considered otherwise. Also take up leadership positions to learn valuable skills and make a difference in your life and those of others.

7. Embrace Various Forms of Learning:

Expand your learning beyond academic pursuits by developing artistic, musical, or athletic skills that interest you.

By following these recommendations, you can make the most of your time at the tertiary level, grow in your career and personal life, and become a well-rounded individual.

11

BEYOND GRADES - GROW HERE

The significance of good grades cannot be underestimated; they play a pivotal role in setting you apart and creating opportunities. However, it is essential to avoid inflating grades that do not genuinely reflect your personal growth. The ultimate reward of your tertiary education should be evident in the kind of person you become - competent, with improved character, and enriched with valuable traits.

When you graduate, aspire to add the name 'Better' to your identity - Better John or Better Joyce - symbolizing the significant progress you have made in areas where you were initially lacking.

I want to emphasize the importance of the three Cs - Competence, Contact, and Character. Besides excelling academically, focus on making notable advancements in these areas:

1. Competence:

Employers and clients will value your competence in the job you undertake. Prioritize acquiring specialized professional and general skills, such as effective communication, problem-solving, time management, and collaboration, as they are crucial in addressing graduate unemployment.

2. Contact:

Cultivate connections with individuals from various professions, tribes, and even nations, spanning across different age groups. These diverse connections may prove beneficial in the future.

3. Character:

True character encompasses the fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). Your character is what will uphold your competence, relationships, and any other achievements you attain.

Achieving academic success is important, but it is equally crucial to grow in competence, build meaningful connections, and develop a strong, virtuous character. This holistic approach to personal development will yield a more fulfilling and impactful life beyond your academic journey. The Bible defines true character as the fruit of the Spirit, encompassing qualities such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). Character serves as the foundation that sustains your competence, relationships, and all other achievements in life.

Drawing from valuable insights presented in resources such as David Jeremiah's Study Bible,

Dake's Annotated Study Bible, and Spiritual Discipleship by J. Oswald Sanders, I have compiled the following descriptions of each character trait:

1. Love:

- The power that motivates selfless responses to others' needs without expecting anything in return.
- A strong devotion to the well-being of others.

2. Joy:

- An inward sense of hope and exuberance, even amidst challenging external circumstances.
- The emotional excitement and happiness derived from personal blessings and those bestowed upon others.

3. Peace:

- A supernatural calm that prevails amidst chaos, with the ability to foster harmony among divided factions.
- A state of quietness and order in the midst of strife and turmoil.

4. Patience:

- The quiet willingness to accept and endure irritating and painful situations.
- Bearing long with the shortcomings, offenses, and provocations of others without murmuring or resentment.
- Enduring failures and irritations without becoming disheartened.

5. Kindness:

- Demonstrating generosity and consideration toward others.
- Exhibiting a gentle, soft-spoken, and refined character and conduct.
- Being sensitive to the feelings of others and consistently seeking opportunities to perform acts of kindness.

6. Goodness:

- Exhibiting moral excellence and engaging in active benevolence, simply doing good.
- Embodying virtues such as kindness, generosity, benevolence, and God-like attributes in life and conduct.

7. Faithfulness:

- Demonstrating enduring loyalty and trustworthiness.
- Displaying unwavering reliability, never giving up, and not letting others down.

8. Gentleness:

- The ability to control reactions to difficult people and situations.
- Showing patience in the face of injuries or offenses, without harboring a spirit of revenge.

9. Self-control:

- The ability to restrain inappropriate passions and appetites.
- Practicing moderation in the indulgence of desires and impulses.

These core character traits are essential for personal growth throughout life. Regularly assess your progress in these areas year after year to measure your development. Nurturing these qualities will contribute to a meaningful and purposeful journey through life.

12

JUST A FEW WORDS ON - HEALTH ISSUES

Good health is an essential prerequisite for pursuing your dreams, as without it, you won't have the vitality or ability to accomplish your goals. Complete physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being is crucial for successfully completing your program.

Pastor James Merritt highlights three different attitudes toward our bodies:

1. Some adore their bodies, obsessing over every small flaw and imagining non-existent conditions, leading to excessive anxiety.
2. Some ignore their bodies, neglecting basic needs like sleep and proper nutrition, resulting in premature wear and exhaustion.
3. Some abuse their bodies, engaging in harmful habits like smoking, excessive drinking, and reckless behavior, with severe consequences in the long run.

From a biblical perspective, viewing our bodies as tools, temples, and vessels for God's purpose is the best approach (Romans 6:13, Romans 12:1-2, II Corinthians 4:7).

To ensure physical well-being:

- Adopt a balanced and healthy diet.
- Regularly engage in exercise, even incorporating walking for short distances.
- Control excessive weight gain and avoid harmful substances like alcohol and drugs. Seek help for any addictions or destructive habits.

- Prioritize rest and consider taking naps after stressful days.
- Stay up to date with immunizations, medications, and health screenings.
- Avoid injury-prone situations and environments that can trigger health issues.

For emotional well-being:

- Manage and reduce stress by removing certain activities from your schedule to make time for rest.
- Nourish healthy relationships and release offenses to maintain emotional and mental well-being.
- Stay cheerful

A medical doctor shared this profound quote ‘In most cases, moderation is the perfect rule.’ In all aspects of health, moderation is key. Avoid harmful practices, while practicing moderation in most things. Prioritizing your health will enable you to pursue your dreams with vigor and success.

13

JUST A FEW WORDS ON- A FAILED (TRAILED) COURSE

The desire of every student is to successfully sail through every examination. However, the reality is that, for various reasons like insufficient revision or poor understanding of course content, some end up with failing grades in certain courses.

This can be disheartening, even for strong students, as it can lead to feelings of failure and self-doubt.

John C. Maxwell wisely said, “*When things go wrong, don’t go with them.*” After acknowledging the disappointment, gather yourself and prepare thoroughly for the re-sit with renewed determination.

Remember that taking a re-sit does not guarantee an automatic pass, so give it your best effort. It’s common for some students to face multiple failures, but the key is to persevere and keep trying until you succeed.

Seek assistance from friends who can help, review past questions, address areas of difficulty, and put forth your utmost effort. While it’s my prayer that you won’t have to experience the frustration of re-sitting exams, remember that it’s not the end of the world if it happens. Stay hopeful, prepare diligently, and give your best to pass the next attempt.

In life, setbacks are common, but with determination, hard work, and a positive mindset, you can overcome challenges and achieve success in your academic journey.

14

JUST A FEW WORDS ON- THE CULTURE (MANNER OF LIFE) ON CAMPUS

Due to the diverse spiritual, social, and economic backgrounds of people in the tertiary environment, you will encounter various ways of living on campus. Some of these lifestyles may contradict your values and even challenge your core beliefs. Blindly adopting certain lifestyles, even if they are popular among the majority of students, may not be beneficial.

However, there are some ways of living that can lead to a fruitful life, and it is wise to adopt them. On campus, you will be exposed to different cultures and mannerisms, and as you mature, you will need to discern what is right and wrong, wise and unwise, and true and false.

Make thoughtful decisions about the manner of life you embrace and the issues of living in school. Choose behaviors and ways of thinking that promote personal growth and advancement while avoiding those that are hurtful or harmful. May God grant you wisdom in navigating these matters.

15

JUST A FEW WORDS ON- CAMPUS SECURITY

During the general orientation at your school, security guidelines will be provided, and safety tips will be posted at the halls or hostels of residence. These notices will focus on personal safety, particularly concerning protection against thieves and fire-related accidents.

At the university, there have been unfortunate incidents where some students were robbed of their valuables at gun or knife points, mainly

because they were alone in secluded areas. Additionally, theft occurrences were common in the halls and hostels, especially during examination weeks when students left their doors unlocked. Furthermore, some students fell victim to tricksters who deceived them and made away with their valuables.

While the school endeavors to maintain security, it is essential for you to take personal responsibility for your safety. Whenever possible, try to have company and avoid being alone in secluded areas. Live wisely and exercise caution to protect yourself and your belongings.

Following the provided security guidelines and safety tips will contribute to a safer and more secure environment for everyone.

16

JUST A FEW WORDS ON- CAMPUS RELATIONSHIPS

What I am referring to is committed relationships or courtship, the decision to become exclusive with one person. This topic is highly intriguing and significant on campus.

Although I don't consider myself an expert in this area, I maintained healthy friendships with the opposite sex but didn't enter into courtship until I was nearing the completion of my

Master's education. While my experience might not be suitable for everyone, I can offer some general guidance.

For some, starting courtship on campus has been beneficial, leading to meeting their future spouses. For others, it may involve a series of trials and errors before finding success. However, my overall advice is to commence courtship for the right reasons – to genuinely consider someone as a potential life partner. The timing should allow you to dedicate the necessary time and attention to the relationship. It should honor God and not leave you burdened with guilt or emotional scars.

The relationship should aid in personal growth, shaping you into a better person. If it becomes detrimental, heavily distracts you from your studies, leads to immoral behaviors, or fails to progress positively – seek help or reassess the situation.

Regardless of the plan you adopt – whether to wait or begin courtship soon – approach

it wisely. Matters of the heart require careful consideration. Take the time to get to know each other before committing exclusively. If you are already in a courtship, educate yourself on making the most of this period and preparing well for marriage. Additionally, consider sharing this journey with at least one of your parents or mentors to ensure accountability and support.

17

JUST A FEW WORDS ON- MANAGING YOUR FINANCES

Dr. Robert Jeffress, the Senior Pastor of the first Baptist church in Dallas, Texas, teaches an ABCD approach to wise financial management based on the book of Proverbs:

A - Adjust your spending:

Distinguish between your needs and wants, and exercise control over your spending. Avoid impulsive purchases of non-essential items or extravagant purchases to impress others.

Creating a budget will help guide your spending, ensuring that you focus on essential items and spend within your means.

B - Be careful of debt:

Avoid the habit of accumulating debt to purchase items that strain your finances and keep you struggling. Many people fall into financial debt due to their inability to delay gratification, opting for luxuries they can't afford and don't truly need, just to impress others. It is wise to think long-term and only take on debt for items that provide lasting benefits.

C - Consistently save and invest portions of your income:

Even as a student, it is never too early to start saving and investing. Although your allowance may be modest, setting aside a little in a savings account will prove beneficial in the future. Some of my colleagues could have had significant investments if they had saved even small amounts periodically during their student years. Be cautious of get-rich-quick schemes

and opportunities that promise high financial returns with no commensurate work. Begin your investment journey by opting for low to moderate-risk opportunities, and as you gain experience and confidence, consider exploring higher-risk options.

D - Devote a good portion to God's work (and others):

In addition to disciplined financial management, demonstrate generosity by allocating a portion of your income to God's work through tithes and generous offerings. Also, find ways to support others and give back, as your blessings enable you to help others in your own small way.

By following this ABCD approach to financial management, you can cultivate wise habits that will serve you well throughout your tertiary education and beyond.

18

JUST A FEW WORDS ON- MANAGING YOUR TIME

In this life, time is our measure, and what you dedicate your time to is equivalent to what you are committing your life to. Without proper planning and setting priorities, you may find yourself drifting aimlessly through life.

To effectively manage your time, two crucial practices are essential:

Set priorities:

Identify what holds the highest importance, what is less important, and what is not worth your time at all. Being able to assess your tasks and establish clear priorities will prevent time wastage and distractions.

Priorities should be continually defined and for a student, dedicating ample time to schoolwork should be a core priority, occupying a significant part of your day.

Plan at least your day:

Have a list of your daily goals and intentions, and what you aim to achieve by the day's end, or even over the course of a week, month, or year. While some days may not go exactly as planned, having a plan is better than having none at all. Consider how to utilize waiting times, free moments, and how to catch up on unfinished projects.

Allow flexibility in your plan and make adjustments as needed. Continuously refine your daily routine until you achieve a more consistent pattern.

19

JUST A FEW WORDS ON- WHAT TO DO AFTER SCHOOL

After completing your compulsory one-year National Service, you will have several options to consider:

1. **Work immediately** - This entails either seeking employment or starting your own business.

- 2. Further your education** - You can choose to pursue higher education to enhance your skills and knowledge.

- 3. Work and then pursue further education** - You may opt to gain work experience first and then pursue additional studies later.

- 4. Work and study concurrently** - This involves balancing work and education simultaneously.

You have the freedom to select any of these options, and you can even change your decision and pursue a different path if you so desire. Whatever option you choose, I wish you the best outcome.

Be prepared to go through any necessary processes related to your choice. This may involve taking risks to start your own business, submitting job applications, attending interviews, or even taking standardized tests like the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) or Test of English as a

Foreign Language (TOEFL) if you plan to study abroad or apply for scholarships. Thoroughly research and inquire about your options to make an informed decision that aligns with your goals and aspirations.

20

BECOME THE BEST AT WHAT YOU DO

In our present world, there is a pressing need for individuals who have devoted time and effort to achieve mastery in their chosen fields. Sadly, many people make promises they cannot fulfill, displaying a poor attitude. My greatest aspiration is for you to become a person of excellence and expertise in your endeavors.

Allow me to share insights from three individuals
- Professor Michael Zigarelli, Rick Joyner, and

the Apostle Paul - to guide you on your journey to becoming the best at what you do.

Professor Michael Zigarelli emphasizes the importance of:

- **Dedicate ample personal practice time:** While group practice sessions are beneficial, true excellence comes from personal and dedicated practice.
- **Embrace humility:** Learn from experts, accept constructive feedback, and address your weaknesses to improve continually. Avoid seeking feedback only from peers who may not challenge you to grow.
- **Stay persistent:** Even if the process feels awkward or progress appears slow, do not be discouraged. Many abandon noble pursuits prematurely due to discomfort or lack of immediate results. Stay committed and patient.

These three points are indispensable essentials for mastering any field.

Dr. Rick Joyner, in his book *“Overcoming the Spirit of Poverty,”* highlights five key characteristics of people with remarkable achievements:

- They possess a clear vision of their purpose.
- They remain focused on their purpose.
- They demonstrate wisdom and determination in gathering necessary resources or acquiring essential training to accomplish their purpose.
- They surround themselves with solution-oriented people rather than problem-oriented individuals.
- They refuse to allow obstacles or opposition to deter them, resolutely pursuing their purpose despite setbacks and disappointments.

These five principles are invaluable in the pursuit of notable achievements.

Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, reveals three factors that lead to mastery and remarkable accomplishments:

- Learning contentment and flourishing in both prosperous and challenging moments – Philippians 4:11-12.
- Drawing strength from Christ Jesus to face any challenge – Philippians 4:13.
- Persistently striving for God’s best, regardless of past achievements or defeats Philippians 3:13.

Do not settle for mediocrity; press forward to achieve your highest potential. Many young individuals make the mistake of settling for less than they can attain, hindering their progress and disregarding God’s expectations.

The journey to mastery and exceptionalism will not be easy; it demands extra effort and significant sacrifices. You may face rejection, failure, ridicule, and discouragement, but if your purpose is noble - to attain mastery and excel

in your chosen field - then persevere. Your sacrifices will eventually yield fruitful results.

I wish you success on your journey through tertiary education and beyond. May you become exceptional in all that you do.

A Special Invitation For Everyone

When buttoning your shirt, you must ensure the first button aligns with the first hole. Any mix-up, especially with the first button, can distort your entire attire. Similarly, one crucial decision you will make is to whom you will dedicate your life. This decision determines the Lord of your life and the purpose for which you will live.

Getting this decision right is paramount, just like aligning the first button correctly, as it sets the course for all other decisions in your life.

I recommend Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came to die for our sins, mending our broken relationship with God, our heavenly Father. Through Him, you can find eternal security and

a genuine relationship with your heavenly Father. He is the only way to salvation.

If you have not personally dedicated your life to Jesus Christ or wish to recommit yourself to Him, sincerely pray this prayer:

*“Heavenly Father,
I admit that my sins have broken my relationship with you. I believe that out of Your love for me, You sent Jesus Christ to die for my sins. In my heart, I declare Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord. Thank you for a fresh start with you. Grant me the strength and ability to live for you. I pray this in Jesus’ name. Amen.”*

You can join an accredited Christian fellowship and go beyond just attending church services. Allow the Lord to truly guide your life and decisions.

May the God of Hope be with you. Amen.

About the Book:

Tertiary education presents one of life's greatest opportunities; however, without appropriate guidance, this crucial phase can be mismanaged or underappreciated. This realization has compelled the author to emphasize several fundamental aspects that will ensure the effective utilization of the tertiary education period and beyond.

This informative book titled **'MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TERTIARY EDUCATION'** delves into essential topics including:

- The purpose behind pursuing tertiary education

- Defining your educational objectives
- Understanding the essence of the tertiary journey
- Identifying essential elements and support for success
- Efficiently managing time, finances, and personal well-being
- Exploring opportunities beyond tertiary education

This book serves as an invaluable guide for individuals aspiring to maximize the benefits of their tertiary education and beyond, providing valuable insights even after the completion of their academic journey.

About the Author:

Hope K. Fiadjoe is a young man driven by a mission to inspire people to embrace a life dedicated to God, giving their best, and realizing their full potential. He earned a Bachelor of Pharmacy and Master of Philosophy in Pharmacology degrees from the esteemed Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST, Ghana).

He enjoys teaching servant leadership, Christian spiritual growth, personal development, proper drug use, and health matters. He actively serves in the local church and seeks to address global challenges like spiritual emptiness, poverty, illiteracy, diseases, and self-centered leadership through personal development and meaningful solutions.