

# AMAZONS WATCH

A publication of Centre for Economic and Leadership Development

THE INVENTIVE &  
TRAILBLAZING  
CAREER OF  
PATRICIA BATH

ELAINE LAN  
CHAO  
THE RELEVANT  
IMMIGRANT

A PROFILE IN  
EXCELLENCE - DR.  
ZANETOR  
AGYEMAN-  
RAWLINGS

MAKING LIFE  
COUNT FOR  
OTHERS  
- ALICE EDUARDO



# HELEN ORITSEJAFOR

A LIFE OF SERVICE TO HUMANITY



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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

### **WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF AMAZONS.**

Welcome to the World of Amazons, a world where the celebration of dogged and ground breaking efforts of women form the lyrics of our anthem; a world where freedom and equality for women of all races and class are vigorously pursued and protected; a world where the flag of female leadership, innovation, impact, inspiration and aspiration is consistently flown at full-mast, signaling the dawn of an era where women have resolved to stand tall, refusing to be bowed down, incurably committed to taking on new territories, communities, changing one life after another, while leaving a trail of diverse possibilities for upcoming women to follow.

Amazons Watch Magazine is indeed driven with a philosophy that is fueled by an undying passion and an absolute pleasure to tell stories of Amazons, that would shape cultures, influence purchasing decisions and government policies, transform economies; and most importantly inspire the teeming generation of upcoming women – this is our mandate. This passion stems from a deep desire to see women from the developing world, take a seat on the decision tables of Global institutions, Peace missions and businesses. For only then, can the world experience meaningful development.

In this edition of Amazons Watch, we bring you the story of a quintessential woman, Reverend Helen Oritsejafor, a woman who has blazed the trail in all aspects of human endeavor and selfless service to humanity. Helen Oritsejafor could easily be described as a woman of class, elegance, and beauty, and most profoundly, a philanthropist, who has devoted her energy, taking up the responsibility to reach out to the needy, hopeless, homeless, and poor in the society, touching lives, world over, through support for child education, women empowerment, and poverty alleviation.

Contained also are other interesting articles on topics ranging from women in governance, health, relationships, fashion ideas for work as well as tips for dealing with kids this summer.

We reiterate our commitment to continue to serve you, tell your stories, and hold your hands on the journey, while stopping to celebrate and recognize the achievements, joys and victories along the way.

We will continue to celebrate amazing women through this unique global platform. We reiterate our commitment to push for inclusive leadership as a crucial step to accomplishing global sustainability best practices. We will continue to promote initiatives and partnerships that aim to inspire, and campaign for greater representation of women both on company boards and in the field.

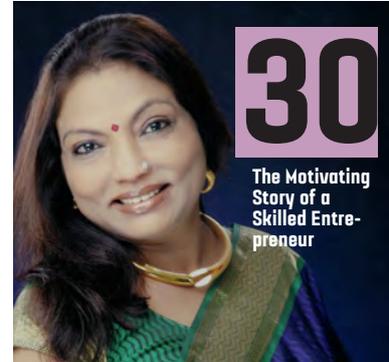
We are truly committed on this path which we have gladly chosen to tread and we urge you to stay with us as we shine the spotlight on the unrelenting efforts of Amazons from developing Nations on the World stage.

Relax, maybe grab a glass and welcome to our world!

*Furo Giami*

Publisher/Editor in Chief

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# THE GLOBAL WOMEN LEADERS HALL OF FAME (GWLHOF)

THIS IS AN UNPRECEDENTED GLOBAL NETWORK OF GREAT WOMEN LEADERS, WHO ARE IMPROVING AND EVOLVING THE SOCIETIES WHICH THEY REPRESENT.

## WHAT IS THE HAL OF FAME FOR?

- ✓ To preserve the plan of women in history by archiving the told and untold stories of their giant strides.
- ✓ To celebrate their untiring and impactful contributions of women to the development of their nations' heritage.
- ✓ To connect women from various climes and generations; whilst inspiring the younger generations to dare to dream and unleash their potentials.
- ✓ During each annual induction ceremony, inductees will be invited for a forum to discuss and proffer solutions to a common predicament, facing their nations.
- ✓ The remarkable woman is the Hall of change agents, pathfinders, stereotype and boundary breakers and most especially, record breakers.

## CRITERIA FOR INDUCTION

- ✓ Prospective inductees should be a woman and meet 2 or more of the following criteria.
- ✓ A pacesetter in her field.
- ✓ Made/Making an outstanding and evident contribution in their field and nation.
- ✓ Changed and upgraded the status of women.
- ✓ Set new standards for achievement.
- ✓ Responsibel for charting a new path and opening doors of opportunities for women and their society.
- ✓ An inspiration to others.

## SELECTION PROCESS

A team of researchers are responsible for gathering all information of potential inductees. You can join them in making hstory, by nominating an eligible woman. Send an email to [info@celdng-org](mailto:info@celdng-org).

## AMAZONS WATCH

*... The leading voice for  
women in developing nations*

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While great care has been taken in the receipt and handling of materials, production and accuracy of content in the magazine, the publishers will not accept any omissions, which may occur. The publishers would like to thank all those companies and individuals who took part in the magazine and wish them every success.

# Letter to the Editor

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*I related to “the pregnant with tumours” article [Issue 13]. ... I suffered the same problems and though my story did not have the same ending with that of the writer, I like the positivity she dissipates. Keep up the good work.*

**- Kemi Fatoki - Nigeria**

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*Too many women magazines in Africa are focused on only beauty and gossip. It was an interesting shift from the norm when I came across the Amazons Watch magazine. I have been an ardent follower since then. Kudos editor.*

**- Elna - South Africa**

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*I enjoy reading the Amazons watch magazine and must commend your efforts at bringing real issues facing women to the fore front. I think you should balance the page time allotted to stories to reflect all the continents the magazine covers. I observe some countries are not very well represented. Besides this little issue, which I believe will be taken into consideration, the magazine is a must read.*

**- Aalia - India**

We love to hear your views and comments. Letters for publication in Amazon Watch Magazine should be sent to [editor@amazonswatchmagazine.com](mailto:editor@amazonswatchmagazine.com)

# CONTRIBUTE

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## SEND A CHILD TO SCHOOL

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To contribute to the overall development of vulnerable children and youth through education, enhanced capacity building programs, poverty eradication projects, international cultural exchanges and youth leadership development programs





# HELEN ORITSEJAFOR A LIFE OF SERVICE TO HUMANITY



About 90 million people - roughly half of Nigeria's population - live in extreme poverty, according to estimates from the World Data Lab's Poverty Clock. Nigeria is home to over 10 million out-of-school children, around half of whom are girls - and it is hardly coincidental that the country with the world's highest number of out-of-school children is home to the highest number of people living in extreme poverty. Therefore, it becomes relevant to celebrate a woman who has blazed the trail in all aspects of human endeavor and selfless service to humanity. Helen Oritsejafor could easily be described as a woman of class, elegance, and beauty, and most profoundly, a philanthropist, who has devoted her energy, taking up the responsibility to reach out to the needy, hopeless, homeless, and poor in the society, touching lives world over through support for child education, women empowerment, and poverty alleviation.

Helen Oritsejafor is the co-pastor of Word of Life Bible Church International Gospel Centre, headquartered in Warri, Delta State, Nigeria. Over the years, as a social entrepreneur and philanthropist, Oritsejafor has also impacted the lives of people all over the world through her service to mankind in establishing several companies, including the Eagle Flight Micro Finance Bank Limited, African Broadcasting Network TV Station, and Eagle Height International School, among others.

In this exclusive interview, Oritsejafor shared with Amazons Watch magazine's Ehis Ayere, some of the challenges and accomplishments of being a Pastor's wife, an entrepreneur, a mentor, and most importantly, a philanthropist. Excerpts:



Please tell us about your background and some of your experiences growing up as a girl.

My name is Helen Adunola Oritsejafor. I am a Pastor and I am mostly called Mama Helen. I actually came from Addo-Ekiti. My father is from Addo-Ekiti and my mom is from Ondo State. My parents were both great educationist. My father had a school assisted by my mother and the school turned out to be one of the best schools at that time. My mom had five of us and she passed on after the fifth child. So, my father had to remarry and also had concubines, so you can officially say that I am from a polygamous home. Growing up without a mother was quite challenging. Evidently, every child would love to have the love of a mother. My father had to play the duo role of being a father and a mother.



*I have always been wired through service, providing services to people and adding value.*

He was a wonderful man; he loved people. I would always reference the fact that I learnt so many things from him, especially when it has to do with being a philanthropist. My father became father to many children who were not biologically his, through philanthropy.

When I was eight years old, I had an experience that was incredible. I, alongside my siblings and cousins were invited to a ceremony. A family friend had a baby and we were invited over to celebrate with her.

I was just about to enter the house when the woman of the house approached me and said I have a special plate of rice with big chicken for you. As a child of 8, it was quite exciting to be singled out among my siblings. So by the time I got to where the food was set out, just trying to pick the plate, a hand pushed my hand over and led me to picking another plate. I couldn't resist the hand. I heard this voice: "don't". My cousin who was by me ate the food. But by the time we got home, she started convulsing. It was a dramatic moment. I am sad to say she died. She took my death. Anytime I think about it, I feel teary because it was such an experience for an 8-year old girl.

As a little girl, I would put myself on a fast, and my father would ask me 'what's wrong with you?' How could you be fasting at this age?

So you have a Christian background?

Yes. It is a Christian background. The condition of having to just look for God, even though, he wasn't missing, and just trust him and have every bit of experiencing him was just there. My father couldn't just understand why I was that driven and sometimes they would go to him and say "she refused to eat".

Was this before the incident?

It was and continued after the incident. With the innocence

of just been a child longing for God, I could just be in a corner crying, repeating the same words, "Lord I love you, I want to serve you". So, I went to school and later ended up in the United Kingdom. I spent most of my life there. At some point, I went through my university age and got my Masters; and then, I started business as well, doing marvelously well. I was really living large.

**We understand that you dropped all your ambition, wealth, and political status to support your husband, the renowned Rev. (Papa) Ayo Oritsejafor in the Ministry. Kindly tell us more about some of the aspects of your life you gave up to be with Papa.**

In the UK, I was doing well. I had my office. I was an evangelist. That was an experience in itself.

**You were running a Ministry in the United Kingdom?**

I was going to a church. I just showed up. I was invited to a church and the person who was to minister was just about to start ministering when he paused and said: "There is someone here the Lord is leading me to". He left the Alter and

walked to where I was. People were wondering; what it was all about? Perhaps he had a word from the Lord? He just handed me his microphone and told me "the Lord said you will be preaching today". That cannot be true, I retorted, what am I going to be preaching?" I didn't even plan for this. I walked down to where the pulpit was, opened the scriptures and by the time I was done, it was over two hours. That was the beginning of my Ministry. But, I wasn't even planning to marry a Pastor. I just loved and wanted to serve God.

But one day, there was this very strong desire to return home. I was well situated in the UK and wasn't planning to go back to Nigeria, except to visit my father. But then, it kept coming and it was really strong: "Get back home". You know that in Africa when you hear such voice, there is this tendency to think that it is an evil stuff. But I kept praying and I knew that was the voice of the Lord.

So, I came back to Nigeria and started my business. I started a construction company, rural electricity and also started a bank with some of my friends. I have always been a passionate person and very self-driven.

I was also involved in creating Ekiti from Ondo State. I had some friends in Government then and when my dad hinted to me about the need to, I immediately discussed with my friends and became very involved in the drive for Ekiti State creation. When it was finally created, and in honour my role and wealth of experience, they said I was going to be one of the first female commissioners.

I was really gearing towards running home and running my office. I was putting things in place to ensure that my business side still functions while I will go serve my people at home.

“

*As a little girl, I would put myself on a fast, and my father would ask me 'what's wrong with you?' How could you be fasting at this age?*





*A man can only function when he is at peace with himself; and it is the peace that a woman gives a man at home that can enable him to think out whatever vision that God has given to him.*



One day, it was a Muslim holiday period, but being a workaholic, I left my apartment and went to the office and also instructed my manager to come over. While at I got a call from a friend that said there was this Man of God in town and because they know I love prayer asked; “won’t it be nice if you just come over?” So I said that would be lovely. But I missed it because at that time we were having a little bit of difficulty setting up things we needed to do in the office. I had to step out and left word with my manager to let me know when my friend showed up so we could go for the meeting. He didn’t send for me; he never came; so I just assumed they also didn’t show up.

Finally when I got downstairs at Eko Hotel in Victoria Island, Lagos, he said he forgot that they came. So, I thought it was the will of God. Then, after I was done, my phone rang, still in my apartment in Victoria Island, and I picked the phone and it turned out to be my friend again. So the friend asked if I still wanted to come and I agreed. So, we went. We went to Ikeja at Sheraton Hotel. We were all at the Lounge, waiting for the man of God. I had no clue of who this very man of God was. I mean I have never

met him. I have never been under his ministry. I have never watched or seen him preach before. When he walked in, with my British background, it was customary for men to stand up when a woman walks in, but when a man walks in the women sit it becomes a personal decision for the men to stand or not. But when this man showed up, I stood on my feet. It was spontaneous for me.

We all got into a very hearty conversation, but then being very business minded I cut in and politely reminded him that we actually came there for prayers”. But as he started to pray, we bowed our heads, and before I knew it, I found myself, not literarily, I mean physically, I had myself positioned by him and I heard a voice: “This is your husband”. Yes, that was the experience I had. And it was very hard for me because I wasn’t planning to marry a pastor. My first reaction was that it wasn’t going to happen. So, I decided to wait on the Lord. I took a fast and all that and on the seventh (7) day, just as I was about to round up, my phone rang. Lo and behold, it was him. And I just heard on the other side: “My name is Ayo Oritsejafor, may I speak with Helen”. It is still as powerful and strong as ever.

**How challenging was it to be married to a Man of God?**

It was challenging and the reason I will say this is because my desire was not to end up with a pastor. That was not part of my prayer budget for a man. So, even though I had fasted and all that I was still struggling. When I was leaving the UK for Nigeria, my first conclusion was that I can stay in Lagos. I was never going to live anywhere else other than Lagos. I have never been to Warri. I never knew where Warri is situated, besides seeing it in a map. I was really struggling with this. I was practically saying no within me, until one day; my driver didn’t come on time to pick me so I had to drive down to the office, and as I was driving, I was negotiating a bend somewhere along the way to my office, and I heard a voice that said to me: “The way up is the way down”. Then, I started literally wailing in the car, wondering why God would want to bring me down. What have I done? It was very confusing and sad. When I got to the office, I started praying and asking God: “What is your will for my life?” at the end of the day, I was broken down, not my will but His will. So, I decided to marry this man and at that moment peace engulfed



me, a wonderful peace. It was a great experience. I knew I was now in God's plan for my life. Right there, I said some powerful things to God. I said: "You have to go with me".

It means that I was not going to be a commissioner anymore. It means that I was leaving Lagos. It means that I was not going to do some of the construction work and some of the things I was doing, even if I still run my business in a skeleton manner. So, I still remember on my wedding day, a friend walked up to me and said: "what a waste? So you mean you will leave these for something that you don't even know. I mean this is a complete waste?" I have had a lot of opportunities in my life. So it was a rude shock in my life.

Finally I got to Warri. It wasn't a joke. It was a complete different world entirely. I got to church. The church wasn't as built as it is now. It was a flair floor, sand, and Saturdays we will wet it so as to be able to have a service against Sundays, and then women with their rollers on. I mean it was a complete dark world for me. I mean at some point I said: "What have I done God to deserve this?" But I knew I was a woman on a mission

because when I had that quiet time with God I promised that I will do my husband good for the rest of my life. And that is the oil, the tonic that keeps driving me; everything opportunity I have to add oil to this man is a great honor for me and I do it without hesitation at all.

**What are some of your roles in the ministry that has led to the growth of the church in reaching out to so many people all around the world?**

To start with, as a wife, that is very important, men are not like women. A man can only function when he is at peace with himself; and it is the peace that a woman gives a man at home that can enable him to think out whatever vision that God has given to him. So I think, to a large extent, I have tried my best to be very submissive and ensure peace at home. That's number one and very important.

When you look at this structure, I also participated knowing that my background is also into construction. I had to work with some of our people. I had to work with some of our engineers. There would be time when I had to send some of my staff in Lagos to help with the pricing

and some few other things. So, I was practically involved with the building along with all the people. So the structure is there.

Then, the aspect of building the human capital, which has to do with both male and female, and as a pastor's wife, I am the President-General of Daughters of Sarah Fellowship, which has to do with the women wing of the Church, married women and women, from 36years and above, unmarried. I nurture them and teach them what it is to be married. I encourage them in the aspect of letting them know that life does not end up in the kitchen and having children. And that you can go out there and be everything you desire to be on earth. So, I build capacity.

And yes, of course, I do soul winning. I go out there in the market to actually do crusades, community crusades, market crusades- soul winning practically. In fact, through that medium I have been able to raise hundreds of children, indigent students that I have given out scholarships to. I do a lot of that to build the ministry.

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*The importance of women being able to work as well as raise children left an indelible impression on me*

There has been an ongoing debate on the assertion that religion has a role to play in national development. The continent of Africa is facing great emergence of underdevelopment and Nigeria is not left out as evident in her educational, social and economic deterioration. What are your thoughts on this, and do you think the Church is doing enough today to help address some of the prevalent challenges in the country?

Let's put it this way, when you talk about decadence, whether it is financial situation that is all over the world anyway, though very prevalent in Africa and precisely in Nigeria. I think the church community has done quite a lot.

Let me take you back to over 20 years ago in Warri, the condition of this place was so bad. We had inter-tribal wars. It was horrible; companies were practically leaving at that time. But my husband took a role that is very endearing. When others were running away, he stood and he was able to dialogue with some of the youths out there that had one problem or the other, who felt they were marginalized and felt that they should be empowered. So, they took to arms and it was terrible, but he did everything, he became an advocate for peace. And through our convention, from the women angle of the church, in fact that was how we started our Trade Fair; we call it, International Trade Fair. So, in conjunction with our convention, we would have our Trade Fair along just to see how we can use that to jump start businesses. At that time, it was really horrible here in Warri. The Church is a salt. The Bible calls us the salt of the earth. Where you have a salt, you must definitely have light. I have had people say, has the light been enough to completely light the darkness we see? Well, yes, to a large extent because if there hasn't been church participation in the governance of this country, I think by now maybe this country would have been extinct.



So, church has done a lot for the economy of this country, for the peace, meaningful peace that we enjoy now; not to mention the aspect of literarily participating in the lives of people.

I just mentioned a while ago, that some children, indigent students, over a thousand and I am being modest have benefited from the little we have to ensuring that a girl-child or a male-child actually have an opportunity of becoming what God has ordained them to be here on earth. And of course, we have a bank. It is incredible. You cannot take church out of governance, because if you do so, be ready for anything else.



*We thank God for the opportunity of being of immense benefit to few, because the poverty rate in Nigeria is enormous*

I read somewhere where you said that one of the problems we have in this country is communication. Can you shed more light on this?

Alright, that's fine. Yes. I think one of the challenges we have is that we lack that grace to be able to dialogue with one another. I don't know what is going on in your life right now, even though we are talking. You might have some perceptions about me and maybe, I also do. Sometimes it can be offensive, but if we can reduce it to dialogue, it will go a long way, because my perception of you may be wrong and your perception of me may also be wrong, and that is why communication is very key whether at the marital level, as a nation, or in church. Look at what is happening in Nigeria now, communication is key. We need to be able to sit down as a family, a nation is a family. Take for instance; I want to do business, this is the business that I do, but how do I make sure that your business does not affect my life because that is what is going on in Nigeria now. You want to do your business, but I should not lose my life in the process of you doing your business, because by the time you are through killing all of us, then who is going to patronize you. We need to dialogue and compromise. We don't need to force ourselves on people. As a nation, let's bring the warring parties together and see how we can resolve things amicably.

We are here at the Eagle Hands International Foundation. What inspired you to set up this foundation?

In the city of Lagos, some years back, the Lord stirred it up in my heart on the need for me to start visiting orphanage homes. And there was a particular one, not so far away from where my office was, and I would go there every Thursday, buy some things that they could eat; and once I showed up at the place the children will be all over me. I almost took in some of them but

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*When you talk about decadence, whether it is financial situation that is all over the world anyway, though very prevalent in Africa and precisely in Nigeria. I think the church community has done quite a lot.*

being single I was advised not to. Then I married my husband. There was a day, this woman came all the way from the United States of America to minister and after that meeting she said: “God would want you to start an orphanage”. The moment she said this it resonated. That was one thing God started with me for years. I have been doing this. So, I went home and told my husband and he said yes and said he too has been doing something for the less privileged in the neighborhood. So, that was how we started. When you talk about the poor in the society, we have the active poor and those who just decide to be poor. The active poor are literarily looking for somebody to give them a lift and when they see the opportunity they will strike; while the others have decided to remain poor, even when you give them a push they will still remain poor.

**There are media reports that you empowered over 100 women through the Eagle Hands International Foundation. Would you see yourself accomplished in that regards?**

No. There is so much to be done though. We thank God for the opportunity of being of immense benefit to few, because

the poverty rate in Nigeria is enormous. People are practically suffering. So when you look at that you see that it is a just a little drop in the ocean. This is my passion. This is my life. This is what I love to do. And I thank God for putting me in such a position to be able to help.

**There are influential reports that women often bear the brunt of poverty and limited access to economic opportunities, due to unfavorable access to financing. What are your thoughts on addressing and improving women’s access to financing?**

Access to finance for women is very important. Let me tell you, build up a woman and you build up a nation. Because from that woman, she is an aunt to someone, she is a mother to someone; she is a wife to a man somewhere and so one. One thing I have noticed about our Nigerian women is that they are very industrious people. They are strong people. Even when you talk about farming, most of the farms are literally cultivated by women. And yes, for me, I just feel, creating microcredit for these women to be able to create a startup is something that would feed them and the extended family at large. And this is the joy I have, empowering women. This is the only way we can actually create synergy in the economic system of this country.

**We are here at the Eagle Flight Micro Finance Bank Limited. Let me start by asking, what inspired you to entrepreneurship?**

To start with, I have always been wired through service, providing services to people and adding value. And of course, if I have to trace my life back to seeing my father, an industrialist per excellence and a politician; I mean, in his twenties, he started a school. When I look at my father then, I was really motivated. I felt there was no room for laziness. And then I choose a lineup of business that I know is service oriented, to see how I can add value to people. Weather, it is having a microfinance bank like this, where we can actually give out micros loans to those out there who people wouldn’t have considered.

There was a particularly woman who came to our head office to meet with me. I was just staring at her from the hall. People were questioning her. I heard her going on and on saying she doesn’t have any money but if people will just assists her she would be happy. She did not have N2000 to open an account. I was so moved by that. So I invited her over and by the time we had a conversation, I discovered that she was a woman who would do everything on earth to be successful if



anyone will believe in her. Then, I told her we will support her. Few years later, she walked into my office, and said: "Mama, I want to surprise. Just so you know, few years ago, you took a risk on me, investing, but today, I can literally sign off N50 million.

It is true empowerment. Now, she has houses all over the place. So, I believe in service to people.

**How involved are you in the running of the bank?**

I am the chairman of the Bank. I have a board. I have a due diligence in making sure that things are running well in all our establishments. A lot of people have asked me how I have been able to manage my time. And I tell them it's all about time management. Over the years, I have learnt to prioritize. I know when I am supposed to be at the bank; I know when I am supposed to be in the school. I know when I am supposed to be a wife. I know when I am supposed to be a mother. And I also know when to have time for myself. I have a husband who is a great encouragement to me.

**At the Bank, do you have a structure, a product that is channeled towards supporting women?**

Yes, we do. We have a number of products. We have group lending, which you don't need collateral for. All you need is to have a group formation of 5 or 10 persons involved, perhaps in the same line of business operation. And then, you can come forward and submit your application and the bank would carry out its due diligence to be sure you are actually doing what you said you are doing. Through that we have tried to organize some training on savings culture and capacity building. Sometimes, you may have so much money in your hands, but if you don't know how to manage it, it becomes a problem. And that is why you have poverty mentality people are consumers; but rich minded people are investors.



*Education is not just about the four walls of being in a classroom. It is creating awareness. It is informing your mind. It is giving you options in life.*

We have different products for women, for men and for civil servants. We have those for people who intend to have a house of their own but don't have the money, we also support that. We do micro business and we do macro business as well and that runs into hundreds of millions. We give out loans to N500, 000, as little as N20, 000, as little as N5, 000; and then, we also give loans that run into hundreds of millions.

**There are some experts who think that the TraderMoni programme of the Federal Government of Nigeria needed to be structured in such a way that women would have accounts.**

Yes, that is the truth. I earlier on said something about active poor. When you are dealing with poor people, when you give them money, they will go and buy tie. They will buy "to match". They will squander the money. Such process will never create liberation in the aspect of finance sector. And also, you have to have financial inclusion and the only way to do that is to create responsibility in the heart of people that you are intending to lend to. So we build capacity. We train people to be financially literate. That alone brings liberation because you have to re-orientate people on how to manage money. Money is

currency. It flows. It is for those who know how to manage it. If you don't use it wisely it flows to somebody else that knows how to manage it.

**We are finally here at the Eagle Heights International Schools. Kindly tell us the vision behind the establishment of this school.**

You have just said it all. When you look at the decadence in the society, you will discover that our people have been extremely disadvantaged over the years. But what we have tried to do is to see how we can build a gap where we can be able to achieve qualitative education for our children. My husband and I sat down and talked about it. He started with the vision and I took it up, and I started this school. If you look at Eagle Height International School, the motto actually reflects the vision of what Word of Life Bible Church is: "Building and equipping people that build a nation". At the school, based on the curriculum, which is mostly British, part of Nigeria, and of course, Cambridge curriculum as well, all garnished together to prepare a child for an all-round education. We do not also just leave it there because we actually have three domains of learning. We have the psychomotive aspect, which is the aspect one, getting them into sports. Sometimes, we do inter-house sports.



We also have the cognitive aspect which is the aspect of personal knowledge to them. And that's why we have a robust curriculum. And then, we have the affirmative aspect of learning and that have to do with the emotional aspect. So you see that at Eagle Height International School we have everything tailored to ensure proper education for our children. You know it is also a Christian school as well; so the moral aspect is also factored in. The whole aspect of this is to bridge that gap and offer our children the highest level of education that you can compare to what is obtainable anywhere in the world.

**In Nigeria, women and girls constitute 60 per cent of the illiterate population and their literacy rate remains around eight points lower than that of their male counterpart. What are your thoughts and efforts towards stepping up and encouraging girl-child education in the country?**

I think its education. It is still information. Letting people know the importance. Traditionally, it is expected that if you train a girl-child for example, it is the husband that she gets married to that will finally benefit from it. Traditionally, it wasn't encourages. But now, people are getting to understand that when you have a girl-child, in fact it is the girl-child that will still remember that there is daddy and mummy. Training the girl-child is the wise thing to do and that is being propagated. We have to change that. It is reorientation. We have to get to the grassroots. We need to go to villages and get people to know the importance of education.

Education is not just about the four walls of being in a classroom. It is creating awareness. It is informing your mind. It is giving you options in life. It is directing your choices and helping you to be able to realize your person; so that you can headlong confront the world at large and make yourself meaningful to the mankind.

**With the rise of ICT on the continent and around the Globe, technological methods have become indispensable in classroom teaching and learning. How have you integrated ICT into the learning process in the school?**

It is an integral part. We have an ICT lab. You will later go round and see all that. You know we encourage our children on the need to be very active. We have our website that also permits them. In fact, very recently, we came up with e-library, to allow our children to educate themselves on different journals around the world; so that they can learn what is happening, not just in their immediate environment, but around the world. If I could take you back, you will discover that the economic revolution that is very much on a huge presence in the Western world started firstly with industrialization. But now, they are now into artificial intelligence.

I want to believe that our country Nigeria will really drive that. I think if we can invest a lot in IT, this country will experience a landscape of economic growth that will actually endear us to the entire world.

**Young African leaders and innovate minds believe that improving access to mentorship and incubators will help them become successful business owners. As a successful entrepreneur and business luminary, what is your take on this and what are some of the essential ways you provide mentorship for the youths of Africa, particularly young African women?**

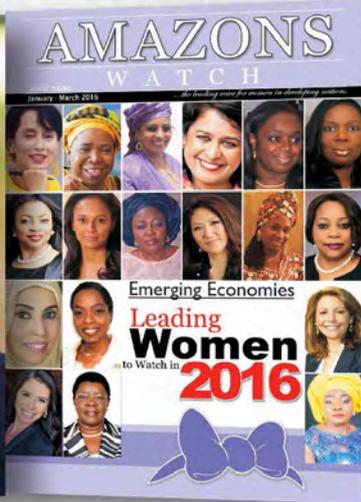
Firstly, I started what I call, The CEO's Company. And through The CEO's Company, I do not even charge a dime. I train them. I build capacity. I try to build structure. I look at what is obtainable in developed countries around the world and of course, what we have in Africa and Nigeria, some companies do not exist for more than fifty years. So what is lacking? What

I have been doing in The CEO's Company is to build structures to teach them how they can organize their organizations; how they can ensure sustainability; how they can ensure succession plan. It is not just to say someone is my son and then you just put him on; if a child comes in, who has not been grounded, does not know what it takes for dad and mom to get to where they are, see a lot of money in the account that runs into billions and say: "oh my God!" and then the first wee, they start squandering. That is our greatest challenge. So I have devoted my energy to see to the building of organizations. When I went to Abuja, I ran into a young lady and she said: "Oh, I watched The CEO's Company, the last one, I was hoping that it will not end; why did you stop?" I said we have to work with time. So that gives me a lot of joy. I have a lot of mentees and I am so glad to be a mentor.



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# MAKE THAT **WORK DRESS** **CODE** WORK FOR YOU

- By Boma Benjy - Iwuoha



*It is indeed necessary for employees to keep up an appearance of trusted business professionals, and as they serve clients on a daily basis, a more formal dress code is required.*

The famous British fashion designer and couturier, Alexander McQueen once said, “Fashion should be a form of escapism and not a form of imprisonment.” If you have a job that already confines you to a daily routine, and takes up more than seventy five percent of your active hours, why imprison yourself in drab clothes too?

I think McQueen was right; fashion is one place, where you can always find your freedom.

They say a picture tells a thousand words, here is an illustration:

The main objective for establishing a formal dress code in any organization is to enable employees to project the professional image that is in keeping with the needs of their clients. It is indeed necessary for employees to keep up an appearance of trusted business professionals, and as they serve clients on a daily basis, a more formal dress code is required.

This often means that the wardrobe of a working woman, will consist of several corporate outfits, but does this necessarily mean that the working woman would consist of drab unflattering clothes? No!

Oftentimes, I hear ladies say, “These are my work clothes, or I can’t possibly wear that to work, or No, it’s not allowed at my work”. And I wonder when they ever get to look smashing? Here is the thing; you can look smashing every day, making the work dress code work for you. The Cambridge Dictionary defines a dress code as an accepted way of dressing for a particular occasion or in a particular social group. In this context, a dress code refers to a set of standards that companies develop to help provide their employees with guidance about what is appropriate to wear to work. Many people have never really read through their organizations dressing policy, they just join in the existing norm at their workplace. Going with the prevailing norm at your work place could mean you are showing up in different shades of grey on a daily basis, or an atrocious shade of purple because that is the company’s brand colour. First things first, pick up the dress code policy





*Fashion is one place, where you can always find your freedom.*

and read it. You will be surprised to find lines similar to this:

- All employees must be clean and well-groomed. Grooming styles dictated by religion and ethnicity aren't restricted.
- All clothes must be work-appropriate. Clothes that are typical in workouts and outdoor activities aren't allowed.
- All clothes must project professionalism. Clothes that are too revealing or inappropriate aren't allowed.
- All clothes must be clean and in good shape. Discernible rips, tears or holes aren't allowed.

And the more specific ones will throw in a clause that sets out company colours such as Green, Grey, Burgundy, Orange etc.

Now what you do with the above is totally up to you. If you work at such a place, do not pick a particular colour and stick to it. Play around a little. A lot of people have the impressions that bright colours look unserious or unprofessional and the result is they spend a fortune trying to "professional" in boring colours. Trust me it is much harder to look good in dull colours.

I have come across several ladies who purchase beautiful dresses and accessories, then sit waiting for the right time and place to wear. Like I said earlier, the right time is every day at work. You can make it work at work, it is an office, not a prison and if they wanted you in uniforms, they will let you know.

I have had to show many ladies what a dress code looks like for them to check out that of their organization, and guess what? None ever said wear "only grey



suits” all week round. And while you are able to fish out your company’s dress code policy let me share a few things you can do to spruce up your work clothes and stay on the fashion radar.

**Accessorize! Accessorize!! and Accessorize!!!**

As long as it is not a uniform, you are allowed to accessorize, you do not have to go overboard with coral beads and pearls, a little accessory here and there can very well change the entire look of a grey dress. And even if you are only allowed to wear black, no one said you couldn’t throw on the red pumps.

**Apply the classics:**

The classics are those fashion items that every lady is expected to have, some of which include a scarf, a blazer, a white tee shirt, a pair of dark colour denim, white button-down shirt, and of course a little black dress. You can read the rest up. These items, most of which I guess you already have in your wardrobe, may not be work friendly when used on their own, but can definitely keep you on the fashion radar, when combined with your work clothes.

**Finally, Experiment:**

So, you were asked to stick to a particular set of colours, like many banks do, why look for the most comfortable? Be the odd one out. Chances are that when you are asked to wear dark colours, you are given specifics like grey, black and navy blue etc.; Well, as long as the policy does not say DO NOT EMBELLISH! you are allowed to accessorize. So, fish out that multicolor scarf hanging in your closet. And don’t forget, no one said anything about your shoes. Be daring sometimes and throw on the bright color cardigan, and no one ever said the grey

has to be the dominant colour, you could have the orange as the dress and accessorize with grey. Yes! orange can be work friendly too. Create a niche, and find something others are not wearing, then wear it and make it yours.

Be the odd one out. Chances are most people will go for the comfortable colours, who says you cannot be different? Trust me, you do not have to join the trend, trends are set by people and you can create yours. Choose those colours that no one would touch and make it yours. I would always go for the odd colour and I look chic in it every day.

Don’t forget; You are a professional and not a robot. Own your style even at work.



*Create a niche, and find something others are not wearing, then wear it and make it yours.*





# TIPS TO CREATING A FULFILLING HOMEMADE SUMMER FOR **WORKING MOMS AND KIDS**

- By Kathleen F



*You may still only have limited time with your kids during the summer, but try to be as present as you can during that time.*

The thought of summer feels like a heart attack for most working moms seeing the pressure and compounded stress that comes with it. Summer is one of the hardest seasons for a working mom. There is the childcare issue: trying to figure out what to do with these kids for three months while we go to work as usual, and once we get it covered, it is often a huge increase in expenses. That is stressful, but the guilt can be worse.

During this season we have to fight hard against comparison because it seems like all the other families are having “magical summers.” There is just no way we are going to be able to fulfill the summer bucket list {even though we think all the ideas are awesome}. We may not be able to afford a vacation, let alone get the time off work.

Remember that summer is a break from school that is an important part of childhood, but part of that is having plenty of time for unstructured play and imagination. Take the stress off yourself: you do not need to make sure they are scheduled with play dates and camps and activities each day. And if they spend most of their days in childcare, that is okay too! Most likely they will have a blast.

At the same time, family adventures and experiences are a good thing, and summer is usually more flexible. But for a working mom, it is harder to make happen. I have given this a lot of thought, and here are my best tips for having a fulfilling summer with young kids at home.

### **Identify Your Priorities**

First of all, make sure you check with your kids to see what is most important for them. You



may have a bunch of ideas of what sounds fun to you, but what if your kid's not interested? I suggest coming up with a realistic list of things to do that include tried and true stuff your family loves, and maybe some new adventures.

Once you have your list, identify the things that are highest priorities. Things that you would be so disappointed to miss. Then schedule them! If they are on the calendar/tickets bought/reservations made, you'll be that much more likely to actually do them. Anything else you get to squeeze in is bonus.

### Be Mindful of Media Use

When it comes down to it, I do not think it is the actual activities that you do that will create lasting memories, but the feeling you get from being together as a family. You may still only have limited time with your kids during the summer, but try to be as present as you can during that time. So while it is probably good to limit your kids' screen time as well, here I am talking about YOU. Some ideas:

- Take social media apps off your phone just for the summer
- Schedule weekly media-free family time, like game nights or picnics
- Start a no-phone morning routine to get in the right mindset for when your kids wake up
- Try an app like Forest that incentivizes you to leave your phone alone (I'm using it right now to write this post!)

### Consider a Staycation

If you do not have the funds, energy, or time to take an extended vacation, a staycation could be the perfect choice for your family. In any town, there are bound to be plenty of places and activities you have not explored. Check out this post for some ideas of things to do, or what you and your family might need more is just some lazy days at home. Permission granted!

### Become a Pool Mom

Part of what I remember best about summers growing up is

going to the neighborhood pool almost every single day. When we were old enough, we were allowed to go on our own, but even if you have young kids you can make this happen! All it takes is a little prep and a routine, and then you can be ready to go within a few minutes. Here are some things that have helped me:

- A designated pool bag with extras of everything, stored right by the back door.
- Pack snacks because something about swimming makes you ravenous.
- Time it right. During the week I like to have a quick early dinner, then take the kids afterward. That way it is not so hot, they have eaten, and the pool closes in an hour, so I do not have to be the bad guy telling them it is time to go.
- Get a good swimsuit for yourself. This is an investment! Choose one that fits, will last, and you will feel great in.
- Laundry ASAP. Basically just strip everything off everyone as you walk in the door.
- A corollary to this is to invest in some good backyard toys. Then, on those nights when you do not feel like hitting up the pool, you can just open up the back door and let your kids go.

### Choose a Summer Hobby

Lastly, make summer fun for you too - you as a person, not a mom! This could be a perfect time to pick up a new hobby. Teach yourself to grill - it is not just a man's job. Tackle a summer reading list. Test and choose a signature drink. Invite people over. Take an online photography course. Plant a small garden. Create a summer memories scrapbook. There are so many options, and most of them don't require a ton of time or money. Have fun with it!



# STEM

## THE WORLD'S OFFENSE AGAINST WOMEN

- By Eruke Ojuederie



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*Women constitute up to half of the world's population, they are ready to be involved in developmental activities and should be put to good use.*

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Several years ago, we could say that there was a huge career gap between the genders all over the world. More women were involved in caregiving roles, family functions, and specific jobs which were considered suitable for women (because of the deeply rooted feminine features, and ability to multi-task within somewhat stress-free subtleties) such as teaching, nursing, and catering. Women were regarded as the "weaker sex" as they were generally considered incapable of keeping up with roles that involved security, physical strength and might, and an all-around mental/emotional stability.

The men, on the other hand, were seen as protectors, leaders, and builder who in most cases have things figured out. This notion was born out of a close study of natural occurrences over time and not particularly because a certain category of the individual was selected to be marginalized. A meta-analysis concluded that men prefer working with things and women prefer working with people.

In the past in developing continents like Africa and Asia, customs and traditions dictated the roles of each member of the society. For instance, in rural African communities where communal living was the

structure upon which they were built, girls were groomed to be home keepers and in order to avoid distractions, they weren't sent to school. At that time, the only medals a woman could get revolved around being responsible through marriage, being a good home keeper (which included the proper training of her girl children), and the act of submission as a wife. Short of these, she was limited in vision not because she couldn't dream big dreams, but rather because she didn't even know what to dream about. Her society had made her short-sighted to the possibilities of career paths.

It was not the men that limited her by relegating her to the background and seizing choice jobs in exotic places. No! it was cultural norms passed down from one generation to the next. The custodians of these norms

didn't know any better. They saw a weaker sex and not the strength capable of causing socioeconomic development across nations of the world.

An article by Rebecca Onion titled "Unclaimed Treasures of Science", reveals that as far back as the Cold War, there were already women in STEM in the developed countries. The official government line during the Cold War was: STEM careers for everyone! But as historians Margaret Rossiter and Sevan Terzian have pointed out, that push for science, technology, engineering, and math conflicted with gender norms and discriminatory institutional practices, resulting in a confusing set of mixed messages for women and girls. A book by historian Laura Micheletti Puaca titled "Searching for Scientific Woman power: Technocratic Feminism and the Politics of National Security, 1940-1980" buttresses this point. Puaca wrote about female scientists, engineers, and educators who used innovative tactics to help women succeed in STEM, long before second-wave feminism in the late 1960s and the 1970s made issues of employment equity and stereotyping part of the national conversation.

According to the historian, World War II gave women their starting

point. During the war, demands for more of what was often called "scientific manpower" and a shortage of civilian male workers prompted government and industry to start programs to train women in science and engineering. But when men returned from the service, women's status in STEM fields worsened. The GI Bill sent a flood of male students to American universities, and opportunities—both for women who had gotten quick wartime training and for more established female scientists—dried up.

### Importance of having women in STEM

It goes without saying that it has become a necessity to have more women in the STEM fields with the rush of digitalization consuming the world. The coming years will see massive changes in all sectors of the economy and nations of the world need to be prepared for this surge. Women constitute up to half of the world's population, they are ready to be involved in developmental activities and should be put to good use. In addition, STEM-related organizations and groups must be commended for their relentless efforts towards encouraging a greater participation of women and girls in STEM fields and activities.

### The way forward

Despite the successes already recorded regarding women participation in STEM activities, there is a lot of work to be done.

**Mentors:** There is the need for a greater support and encouragement from mentor figures. This will go a long way in women's decisions of whether or not to continue pursuing a career in their discipline.

This may be particularly true for younger individuals who may face many obstacles early in their careers. Since these younger individuals often look to those who are more established in their discipline for help and guidance, the responsiveness and helpfulness of potential mentors are incredibly important. Cultural Exchange: Another way to spike up the number of women in STEM is through Cultural exchanges.

It is true that some tribes and races have cultural barriers which may affect their decisions; cultural exchange programmes should be incorporated in those systems to enlighten such communities on the benefits of having women who are self-reliant.



*In the past in developing continents like Africa and Asia, customs and traditions dictated the roles of each member of the society.*



# TOP 25 BANKS SUPPORTING WOMEN IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

## Turning Promises into Action for 2030 Agenda of the SDGs



A 2015 report by McKinsey Global Institute states that by 2025, \$12 trillion, could be added to global GDP by advancing women's equality. Indeed, it cannot be over emphasized that investing in women is central to sustainable development.

This edition of Amazons Watch magazine has included a listing of **Top 25 Banks Supporting Women in Developing Nations**, to highlight the activities of banks across developing nations, that have prioritized women's advancement in the economic spectrum, and to showcase their contributions to the socio-economic development of women, through various programs and initiatives.

Therefore, the listed banks were selected due to their contributions through development trainings and literacy programs for women, gender diversity in corporate boards, women friendly loan programs and policies, business financing, developmental support and capacity building, gender equity in the workplace, and for creating an enabling environment for women employees in their respective host communities. In 2014, a report by the International Finance Corporation - IFC stated that Women often bear the brunt of poverty, and often have limited access to economic opportunities, due to unfavourable access to financing; these financial institutions have taken steps towards advancing women's socio-economic status through various enabling programs and initiatives, geared towards tackling the challenges faced by women due to lack of access to finance.

In a time when people are more aware than ever of workplace gender inequality, and the negative impact it can have in workplaces, these banks have consistently committed to turning promises into action as world strives towards the Gender equality as captured in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals.

Here is Amazons Watch Top 25 Banks Supporting Women in Developing Nations - 2019.



**Access Bank Nigeria Programs**  
*W - Initiative, W Academy  
 'W' Power Loan*



**Canara Bank - India Programs**  
*CED for Women  
 Business Guidance/Emerging Entrepreneurial Opportunities  
 Training facilities & Financial Assistance for Women Entrepreneurs*



**Eco Bank Limited Programs**  
*Ecobank Female Entrepreneurs Initiative  
 Gender Diversity in Corporate Leadership*

# Top 25 Banks Supporting Women in Developing Nations



**Kotak Mahindra Bank - India Programs**  
*Kotak Mahindra Bank Silk Programme  
 Gender Equity in The Workplace  
 Enabling Environment for Women Employees*



**FirstRand Group Programs**  
*Gender Diversity in Corporate Leadership  
 Athena Initiative - RMB*



**Zenith Bank Programs**  
*Zenith National Female Basketball League  
 Scholarship and Education Programs*



# THE MOTIVATING STORY OF A SKILLED ENTREPRENEUR

- By *Miracle Nwankwo*

It was a day like every other day in India but a day to be much remembered in the life of **Kalpna Saroj**, India's "Slumdog millionaire", when her father came to her rescue.

Saroj was a child bride, married off at the tender age of twelve and eventually found herself to be a victim of abuse.

She was born in a little village called Roperkheda in Maharashtra, 1958, to a lower middle-class Buddhist family. Saroj's father was a police constable in another village called Repatkhed in Akola. She lived with her parents and four siblings, which consist of two brothers and two sisters.

Life was meaningful to the beautiful young girl, until she was given to marriage after completing class seven. Having being married off, she moved to Mumbai to live in Thane's Ulhasnagar slum, with her husband's family who occupied a 10x5 ft room with 12 to 15 people living under the same roof.

“

*Success is walking from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm*

Not only was she subjected to living in a slum, after six months of being married into the family she began to suffer constant physical abuse from her husband and his family. Saroj was beaten by her husband on so many occasions even for trivial issues like not putting enough salt in his food. She was shut out from associating with people and was also restricted from maintain any contact with her family.

But a day came when Saroj's father decided to pay his daughter and in-laws a surprise visit. However, instead of surprising them, he turned out to be the surprised one when he came face-to-face with his little daughter and could not recognise her as she had become very pale and unrecognisable. He immediately took his daughter and returned home.

That day marked the beginning of a new dawn but not the end to Saroj's struggles.

After moving back home, she was ostracized by the village people, who began to taunt her and her family about her return. She faced mockery and bully in school from friends and other students living in the same community. Tired of being mocked and ostracized, she decided to take her life, but she was rushed to the government hospital, when she consumed three bottles of rat poison.

Saroj recovered and swore to make a meaning out of her life. She begged her family to allow her move to Mumbai in 1972, convincing them that Mumbai

was filled with opportunities of earning. She moved to Mumbai and settled there with her uncle. She started out, working in a garment factory and after some months, she began stitching on the side which brought an added income of Rs 100. Within two years she had saved up a reasonable amount of money that could afford a small house in Kalyan East and she moved her family to Mumbai.

However, a sad situation befell the family. That year, they lost her sister who was seventeen years old due to lack of medical care. The pain and agony of the dead prompted Saroj to engage further in her pursuit.

In 1975, under the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Scheme - a government scheme for scheduled caste people, Saroj received a loan of Rs 50,000 and started a tailoring business in Kalyan alongside a re-sales furniture venture. The business grew successfully and she handed the furniture business to her father while her younger sister took over the tailoring business.



In 1978, Saroj started an association called Sushikshit Berozgar Yuvak Sanghatana, to help the unemployed. Around 3,000 people joined her association who were helped with placements.

In 1980, Saroj remarried Samir Saroj and they had two children a boy and a girl, but Samir died in 1989 and she inherited her husband's steel cupboard manufacturing business.

She continued to thrive successfully in business and in the entrepreneur world and a higher opportunity came to her in what looked like a blessing in disguised. In 1995, a man brought Saroj an offer to buy his land at a very cheap price claiming to be in urgent need of Rs 2.5 lakh, but she offered him only Rs 1 lakh and he took it. After purchasing the land, she realised that it was under litigation and that was why he had sold it so cheap. With no knowledge about land deals she was fortunate to meet the district collector who helped her to sort out the court issues and in two years she got the permission to sell the land.

She gave the land to a builder who built on it at his own cost and she took 35 per cent of the sale of the finished building and gave the builder 65 per cent. This opened her eye to the benefits in real estate and she delved into it.

Saroj continued to prosper in real estate business and she turned out to be a land litigation expert. Although she encountered different challenges along the line which included death threats.

After a period of time, the property business had a turnover of Rs 4 crore and she moved into sugar production after investing in a sugarcane factory.

Her fame soon spread across and into the ears of the owner of Kamani Tubes, a manufacturing company that supplies copper tubes, rods, LED lights and more,

located in Kurla. Over the years, Kamani Tubes had suffered many losses and litigations. The company had been shut for many years when, in 1987, the courts ordered the workers to run the company, but they had failed to do so successfully.

In 1999, the workers of the company approached Saroj asking her to take over the company and fix the mess. Faced with a company with 3,500 bosses, huge loan and 140 cases of litigation and two unions, Saroj took up Kamani Tubes and began work immediately. It was not an easy task all through the process of rebranding the company. Saroj formed a 10-member team, which included marketing people, finance people, bank directors, lawyers, and government consultants. She met with the then state finance minister and all those who had given loans to Kamani. Along the line, the banks agreed to remove the penalties, interest, and also 24 per cent from the principal amount to help her revive the company. After some time, the loans were cleared which also involved Saroj selling one of her properties in Kalyan.

She took over as Chairperson of the company and in 2009 Kamani Tubes came out of SICA (Sick Industrial Companies Act), and in 2010 the company was restarted and the factory moved to another location. There was an investment of about Rs 5 crore into the company by 2011, a profit of Rs 3 crore was achieved. Kamani Tubes is now a profitable company, with a profit of Rs 5 crore every year.

Saroj continued to venture into other businesses including film production.

With over six hundred employees Saroj currently controls six companies; Kamani Tubes Limited, Kamani Steel Re-Rolling Mills Pvt Ltd, Saikrupa Sugar Factory Pvt Ltd, Kalpana Builders & Developers, Kalpana Saroj & Associations, and the KS

Creations Film Production.

Saroj has been recognised on various platforms for her hardwork and impact on the people, society and economy. One of such recognitions include; the Padma Shri award for Trade and Industry in 2013. She is happily married to Shubhkaran and she currently lives with her family in Mumbai.

Her story clearly explains the wise saying of Winston Churchill that: "Success is walking from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm"





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# THE WOMAN IN BUSINESS CAN SUCCEED DESPITE THE ODDS

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Highly successful business women are those who have intelligently figured out ways to consistently run the day in their business, thereby leaving nothing to chance. Nevertheless, this does not in any way indicate that these “highly successful business women” do not often face challenges in their businesses but what ultimately stands them out is the determination to always navigate through the endless issues they encounter while navigating through the top of their business career.

While it is true that all business owners face certain challenges, women have additional and unique obstacles to overcome in business. Working women who have children experience even more demands on their time, energy, and resources. Despite these odds, statistics show that women are starting businesses at more than twice the rate of male-majority-owned businesses. The growing success rate of women entrepreneurs shows that they are resourceful and able to succeed, despite the odds. Women business owners may face challenges in three major areas that are less common to men in the business. These areas include:

## **Gender Discrimination and Stereotyping**

Gender discrimination is a civil rights violation covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It can involve pay disparities—when women are paid less than men for performing essentially the same

job—or demotion or lack of advancement due to taking time off for family or childbirth-related purposes. The term gender discrimination applies whenever anyone is treated differently in the course of employment due to his or her gender.

Although not a federal offense in and of itself, stereotyping falls under the umbrella of gender discrimination. It may come into play when a woman is not thought to be “strong enough” to do a job that entails physical labor or “tough enough” to manage a high-stakes career position that involves a lot of challenges. Some jobs are still seen as “for men” or “for women,” even though those artificial barriers have been proven wrong time and again.

### Dual Career-Family Pressures

Although the Pew Research Center found in 2014 that more and more dads were opting to stay home and care for their families, they are still vastly outnumbered by women in this area. And it’s still a common perception that mothers at home are what’s best for the kids. Pew also found that almost half of all respondents—47 percent—felt that mothers should not work more than part-time, and another 33 percent felt that they should not be working at all but should stay home to care for their children. The sociologist Arlie Hochschild referred to these work-life demands as coming home to the “second shift” of work to take care of children and domestic life.

### Lack of Equal Opportunities in Certain Industries

Lack of equal opportunity ties in with stereotyping, which ultimately leads to gender discrimination. Women are paid less and offered fewer opportunities in some business sectors, and sometimes doors are closed to them entirely because of their gender, such as

in heavy construction. A women’s pay gap remains in place to this day, many businesses may avoid hiring women of childbearing age simply because they don’t want to have to grapple with issues of maternity leave and wondering if somebody will even come back to work after having a child.

Can Women Overcome Business Challenges? This may be the lingering question on your mind, but do not despair, though. Women often have life skills and natural abilities that are useful in business. They tend to be great at networking, and they possess inherent skills for negotiating. They own the ability to multitask. Single mothers are often good at delegating and budgeting, skills that they rely on to manage their families.

#### Specific strategies to help women entrepreneurs and employees succeed include:

1. Creating a strong support network.
2. Considering certifying as a women-owned business.
3. Learning new ways to balance work and life.
4. Staying current on issues that present challenges for women in business, and learn how other women overcome their own obstacles in the business world.
5. Don’t accept that you’re the underdog - because you’re not. Remind yourself that many men would most likely collapse if they had to do all you do on a daily basis.

The responsibilities attached to women in our contemporary society should never account for the reason why they should become poor business people rather every business woman must consider these responsibilities as one of the greatest advantage, that distinguishes them as excellent business women.

<https://www.thebalancecareers.com/overcoming-challenges-facing-women-in-business-3514899>



*Women often have life skills and natural abilities that are useful in business. They tend to be great at networking, and they possess inherent skills for negotiating.*

# LATE GOVERNOR JOYCE LABOSO'S LAST WORDS TO FEMALE LEADERS



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*People will relate more with women leaders and they are able to share a lot of things that they would ordinarily not even think of sharing with a man.*

Kenya's 2017 General Election, despite being the second after the promulgation of the new Constitution, ushered in a number of firsts in the political arena. It was the first time that a presidential election results had been annulled. It was also during this election that Kenya got its first set of female governors.

Apart from Charity Ngilu who had won the Kitui gubernatorial race, the other two female governors, Anne Waiguru

and late Dr Joyce Laboso, were not considered political heavyweights. They were only mastering the ropes of politics at the very top with the win being Waiguru's first attempt at politics and Laboso starting on a new path having only come into politics as her sister's successor.

Dr Laboso, who recently passed on has always been at the forefront of Kenya's power ground championing for empowerment and encouraging

women to set out and achieve their goals. As a pioneer female governor, she highlighted a number of challenges that comes with the role including minding ‘the length of your skirt.’

**Delivering on expectations**

With the first crop of governors in Kenya all being male, the entrance of the three female governors meant that they were the new kids on the block and all attention was drifted to them. They automatically became the litmus test for what women could do and how well leaders perform. On top of that, as women leaders, they are tasked with managing public expectations on a daily basis.

“People will relate more with women leaders and they are able to share a lot of things that they would ordinarily not even think of sharing with a man. The feeling of motherliness and the feeling that she will understand drives the public to us. At the end of the day, this can be daunting as everybody is having expectations of the things you should be able to do for them, and that you should be able to understand because you are a woman, a mother.” Dr Laboso had explained during an interview.

**Tackling challenges head on**

As a female leader, the duty of setting the right image rests on your shoulder and this includes living a life that sets the right precedent for the younger generation. For the female governors, it boils down to the manner in which they carry themselves around including how they dress. Being a county boss upcountry, Laboso said, she was moved to be conscious of her dressing at every one time. “In an upcountry setting, I have had to really be careful about the length of skirts and so on. You do not want people to focus on your dress rather than the content you are sharing.”

Talking about her election win, Laboso did not shy from admitting that a number of people took her to be a joker and thought she was not serious about her decision to run against one of the political bigwigs in the region who was also the incumbent Bomet Governor, Hon Isaac Ruto. She had to stand her ground and do what she believed in despite all the belittling.

Being a politician comes with a number of responsibilities and one of them is being strong enough to counter those who want to bring you down. As the late governor would note, one amasses more distractors as they climb up the political arena. In her case, noted that she got herself more distractors as a governor compared to those during her tenure as the national assembly Deputy Speaker and as Member of Parliament for Sotik. “It is not about being a woman. I am selling myself as a leader. What is it that a leader does?” She challenged.

**Word for women leaders**

According to Laboso, women’s greatest undoing is their aversion to public scrutiny. She urges that women need to develop a thick skin and get over the fear of being harassed, called names in public and ridiculed. She uses herself as an example and encourages women that “If I can be a governor today, then a lot of women can be.” She adds that once you have set your target on something, set out to achieve it and do not back off out of fear.

Source: Standard Media



*As a female leader, the duty of setting the right image rests on your shoulder and this includes living a life that sets the right precedent for the younger generation.*





**DR.  
ZANETOR  
AGYEMAN-RAWLINGS**

# A PROFILE IN EXCELLENCE

Mother of three daughters, Dr. Zanetor Agyeman-Rawlings, is a passionate environmental activist and a believer in holistic wellness in the empowerment of people on a personal, spiritual and socio-economic level.

Currently member of Parliament in the previously male-monopoly Klottey-Korle constituency, Dr. Agyeman-Rawlings is a member of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Environment, Science and Technology as well as the Standing Committee on Gender.

Zanetor graduated as a medical doctor from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RSCI) in 2003 and had ten years of working experience in General Practice and Family Medicine before venturing into politics. She also holds a Master's Degree in Conflict, Peace and Security from the Kofi Annan International Peace-keeping and Training Centre (KAIPTC) and holds certificates in Defence Management and Conflict and Crises Management from the Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College. She also holds a certificate in Women, Peace and Security from the London School of Economics and KAIPTC.

Dr. Agyeman-Rawlings is actively involved in political activism and motivational speaking and speaks regularly at both local, national and international platforms.

As a Parliamentarian she has participated in several international events including

- Serving as election observer in the June 2017 elections in the UK.
- Deputy Head of the Commonwealth Election Observer Mission in Jersey in 2008
- Panelist and speaker at EWA conference in South Africa 2016
- EWA conference in Morocco in 2017
- Social Democratic. Conference in Belgium in 2018
- Westminster Foundation event in UK celebrating 100 years of women in the British Parliament 2018
- Westminster Foundation and Commonwealth Regional Youth Conference in Uganda 2019

Her passion and political activism have seen her organize various social and community intervention programmes targeting the elderly in poor communities, food safety and sanitation sponsoring of youth training in ICT and animal husbandry and the encouragement of youth in responsible leadership and sports.

Her tall list of social intervention programmes include the development of a disaster early-warning Mobile App motivated by the tragic events of June 3, 2015, when floods and an ensuing fire killed over 100 people in Accra.

Zanetor is currently working on an urban agriculture and plastic-waste-to-fuel project and a host of other developmental projects for children, the youth, market women and the vulnerable in her constituency.





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# IS IT TIME TO LEAVE HOME?

- By Kimmy Tom



I sometimes feel cramped in my family home. I feel my parents and siblings will never respect me enough because I am 21 and still living at home.

*Iveren -Nigeria*

I am almost 19, and I hate it that I have very little say about how my life is run. The meal menu, the lights out, even the way utilities are managed. I am considering leaving home.

*Amita -India*

You may begin to feel a desire for independence long before you are ready to leave home. This is a normal desire and in line with God's purpose for children to someday leave home and have their own families.

But how do you know when it's really time to leave home?

Consider the following.

### **What are my motives?**

- Escape problems at home
- Gain more freedom

- Improve status with friends
- Help out a friend who needs a room mate
- Gain experience
- Ease the financial burden on my parents

None of the reasons given above is necessarily bad. But ask yourself, what is my motive? If your motive, for instance, is to escape restrictions, you are in for a shock!

Iveren eventually left home at 20 and shared her experiences. She says " we all have to live with

some restrictions of some sort. When you are on your own, your work schedule or lack of finances will restrict what you can do.

Amita who moved to another town for one year, says, "I enjoyed the experience but I often felt I had no free time! I had the normal chores I thought I was escaping from by leaving home to face, and this time without any assistance from siblings.

So, stop and think of your motive for leaving home. Do not allow others to rush you into making this decision. Even if you had valid reasons for leaving home, you will need more than good intentions. You surely will need survival skills.

### Am I Prepared?

Moving out to live on your own can be likened to taking a hike in the wilderness. Will you trek into wild country without knowing how to set up a tent, light a fire, cook a meal or read a map? Not likely. But this is what many youths do when they move away from home with few of the skills necessary to run a household.

To help you determine whether you are ready to step out on your own, consider the following.

**Money Management** - I've never had to make my own payments on anything, says Margaret, 18. I am afraid of leaving home and having to budget my money.

But you cannot stay at home forever, so you need to learn how to budget money. Why not ask your parents how much it's likely to cost each week for one person to cover rent or mortgage, buy food, run a car or pay for other means of transportation? Then have your parents help you learn how to budget your money and pay bills.

**Domestic Skills** - Sally 17, says what she fears most about leaving home is having to do her own washing. How do you know if you are ready to care for yourself? Try living for a week as if you were on your own. Eat only what you prepare by yourself, that you buy for yourself at the store and that you pay for with money you have earned. Wear clothes that you wash and iron, and do all your own housecleaning. And try to get where you need to go by yourself, with no one picking you up or dropping you off. Following these suggestions will give you valuable skills and increase your appreciation for the work your parents do.



“

*When you are on your own, your work schedule or lack of finances will restrict what you can do.*

**Social Skills** - Do you get along well with your parents and siblings? If not, you might assume that life will be easier when you move with a friend. Most times, best friends find out they cannot stand each other when they move in together. One can be neat, and the other messy, one might prefer living a quiet life and the other very noisy. It just doesn't work, most times. So will you live at home forever because of this? Not necessarily. You have to find a way around it. You can learn a lot about how to get along with people while living at home. Learn how to solve problems and make compromises. Those who leave home just to escape disagreement with their parents learn to run away from conflicts, and not resolve them.

### Where am I headed?

Are you trying to leave home to get away from problems? Or break free from parental authority? If so you are focused on what you are leaving and where you're headed. That approach can be likened to trying to drive with your eyes fixed on the rearview mirror. You are so preoccupied with what you are moving away from that you're blind to what is ahead. So rather than concentrate on moving away from home, have your eyes fixed on a worthwhile goal.

Young adults will always leave and move away from home for different reasons. Whatever your reason is, think it through thoroughly. Listen to your parents or guidance advice about the matter, talk to an older person you look up to.

Then your final question should be "am I ready to manage my own household?"

Good luck with moving.





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# NEGATIVITY AIDS CANCER GROWTH!

Have you felt hurt or betrayed? Have you ever been so bitter and upset towards a situation or person that you could not imagine forgiving them? You may have even replayed the event(s) over and over in your head. With each repetition, your feelings intensify and you feel worse about yourself and it. There is evidence to prove that harboring these emotions can negatively impact your health. Thus the subject of forgiveness surfaces to the top of this article.

Forgiveness from a clinical perspective is the process of relinquishing one's feeling of resentment and thoughts of vengeance. Forgiveness also includes the process of fostering compassion, generosity, and even love towards those who have inflicted pain.

“

*Forgiveness helps in cases of severe emotional abuse. Women in the forgiveness group had significant improvements in depression scores, self-esteem and better overall mastery of their life.*

## Why Forgiveness?

It is obviously not an easy thing to do. Clinicians will undoubtedly tell you if your wounds are deep and traumas many you will need more time to heal. Nonetheless, forgiveness is possible and I believe necessary. Let me tell you why?

Over 15 years ago there lacked any research on the benefits of forgiveness for our health. Thankfully to date, there are hundreds of scientific papers and clinicians ready to share their knowledge with us.

## The Negative Effects of Anger

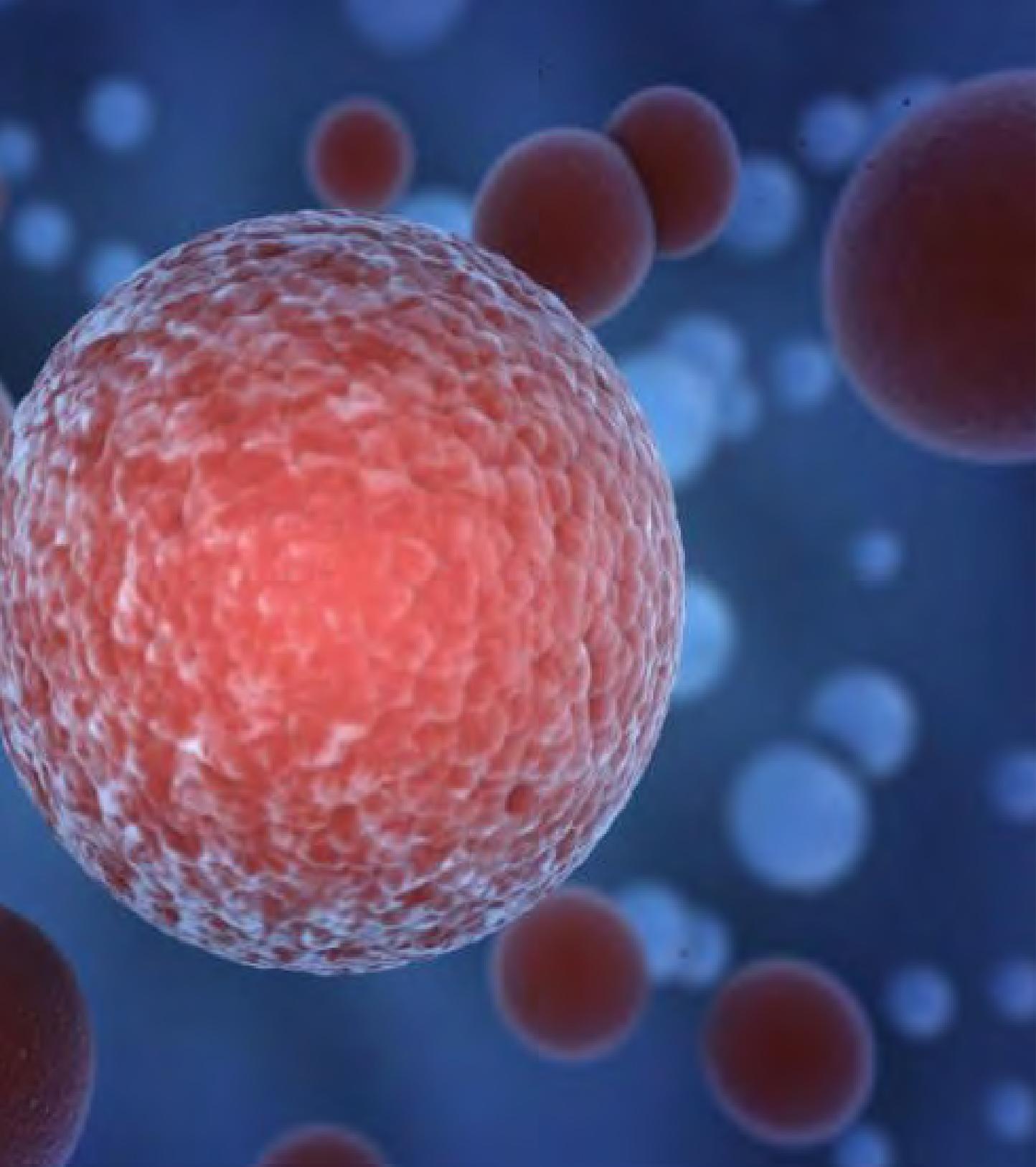
Let us start with the impact of staying angry, being frustrated or feeling negative about an event. Dr. Steven Standiford, chief of surgery at the Cancer Treatment Centers of America, says that holding onto these negative emotions creates a chronic state of anxiety.

This produces a predictable excess of adrenaline and cortisol, which deplete the production of natural killer cells. These cells are your protection against cancer. If you refuse to forgive it not only makes you sick but can keep you that way.

Since we are on the topic of cancer, a neat randomized controlled trial with over 83 cancer patients evaluated feelings of forgiveness, pessimism, and self-acceptance

after taking a course in self-forgiveness. The course taught techniques such as reflection, expressive writing etc.

As expected, the patients that took the course had statistically significant higher scores for self-forgiveness, acceptance, self-improvement, and lower pessimism scores compared to the control group.



### **Forgiveness Helps You Feel Better About Yourself**

If you think of an old memory of being mistreated, hurt, or offended you automatically start to feel unwell. The fact is that there are immediate emotional and/or physiological responses that occur when you are having these memories. These responses include:

- Your blood pressure increases
- Your muscles tighten
- You start to swell

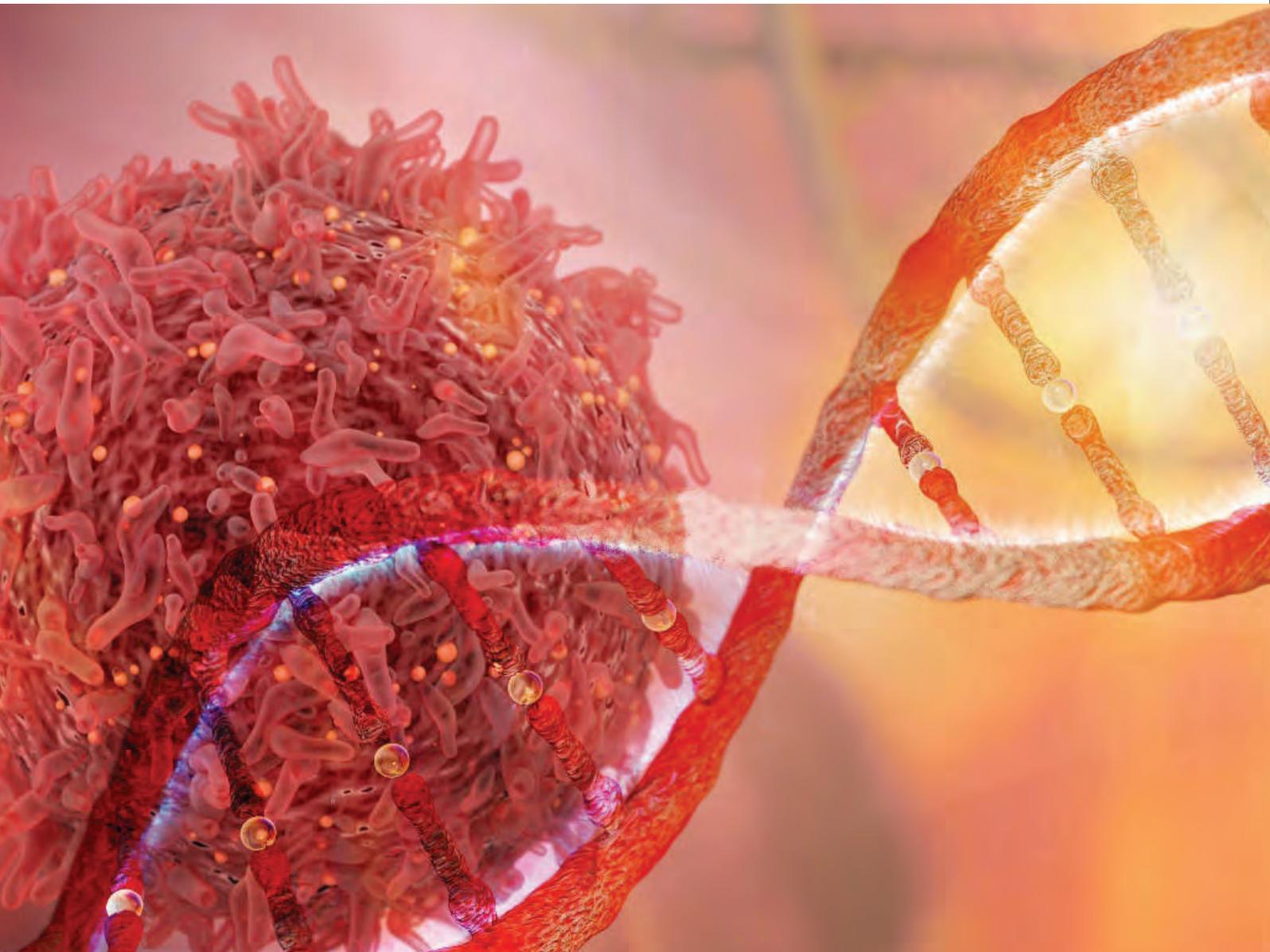
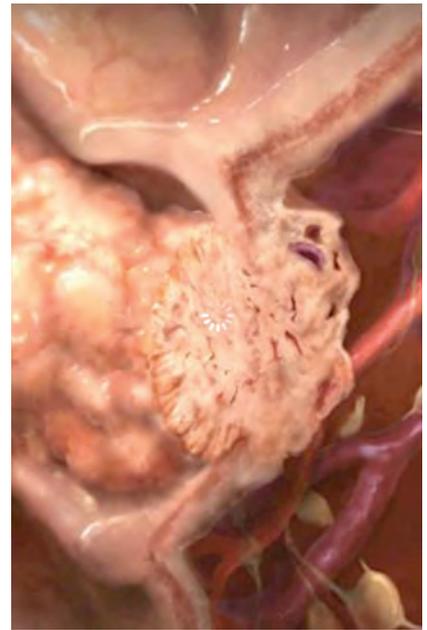
These are all signs of stress and anxiety. Recent studies show that participants who practice empathy and forgiveness to those who do them wrong have a lowered stress response. To further deepen this point, roughly 1,500 Americans who

forgave reported greater satisfaction with their lives, less distress symptoms, less nervousness, and less sadness.

Forgiveness even helps in cases of severe emotional abuse. Women were placed into two treatment groups; the first using techniques such as anger validation, assertiveness, interpersonal skill building, and the second using forgiveness. Women in the forgiveness group had significant improvements in depression scores, post-traumatic stress symptom, self-esteem, less anxiety, and better overall mastery of their life. Months later all these gains were still present! YAY! Forgiveness is powerful!



*Forgiveness from a clinical perspective is the process of relinquishing one's feeling of resentment and thoughts of vengeance*



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# OVERCOMING BULIMIA

## MY STORY

- By Kimmy Tom

“

*I had learnt that one could stop gaining weight by not eating or throwing up after eating, and that started my long painful journey with bulimia.*

I started my love-hate relationship with food at a very tender age. I was about eight or nine at most and was preparing to get into secondary school.

I had always been bigger than my classmates –taller, fatter and bulky.

The State primary education board did not make life any easier for me when they introduced a literature book called “The Fat Woman” to be used in all elementary schools in the state back then.

In one month my named had changed from that given at birth to the “fat woman”. The teachers whom I thought would come to my rescue did not even

help matters as they resorted to calling me that at the slightest provocation from me, as the school had recently placed a sanction on teachers who punished their pupils by flogging. My only safe haven was home, maybe because my siblings were equally fat.

I didn't exactly have an easy time dealing with my weight when I finally got into secondary school. The teasing got worst and I was determined to do something about my weight. I wasn't sure of what I was going to do.

I got an idea from a dog. My Aunt's dog.

I had gone to spend the long vacation with my Aunty Emma.



She was a matured single, living alone at the time and rumours had it that her attraction to dogs came with not having a husband and kids. She nurtured the dogs like she would a child, bath them and spoon fed them. A special vet came to the house every other week to look at the dogs and some of her friends will even jokingly say they wish they could be her dog.

Nicky was the oldest among her dogs and was mother to almost all others. She was angry when her puppies were sold off and went on a protest fast. Maybe something else happened, because Nicky boycotted food for the rest of the year. She barely touched anything she was served and was getting leaner by the day. My aunt resorted to force feeding her every day and Nicky will throw up everything she was fed immediately she was let off the hook. Nicky stopped gaining weight and before I left, the once very fat dog was now a skinny bag of bones.

I had learnt that one could stop gaining weight by not eating or throwing up after eating, and that started my long painful journey with bulimia.

I began restricting my food intake immediately I got back from vacation. I will try to skip breakfast and barely ever touched my lunch. My stomach would roll and growl all day long. I remember being embarrassed if the classroom was quiet enough for others to hear the rumbling. Inevitably, I'd return home in the afternoon ravenous. I'd binge on whatever I could find. Cookies, candy, cake, garri, all kinds of snacks, my mum was a caterer by the way.

### Full Blown Bulimia

My bingeing episodes got out of control. I was eating less and less during the day and would make up for it in the evening. This habit made very little difference on my weight even though I had been on it for years. I did not

add the weight as rapidly as I did before, but stealthily, the number on the small bathroom scale kept increasing. I was in deep thought about why I wasn't losing weight when my aunt called to tell my mum that Nicky had been hospitalized for complications related to starvation. I then remembered. Nicky threw up every time she was force fed and she still was losing weight. I had found my missing link. Purge it all out after eating. And there began my journey with bulimia officially. The process seemed so easy. I could eat whatever I wanted and however much I wanted, and then just get rid of it with a simple flush of the toilet.

I was about 15 the first time I purged. I had just finished a whole pack of cereal combined with several cubes of sugar and a full tin of the much sweetened condensed milk. A wave of guilt immediately hit me and I sneaked into the bathroom, put my hand deep into my throat and brought everything out into the bathroom sink. After I had gotten rid of the offending calories, I felt lighter. I don't just mean that in the physical sense of the word, either.

You see, bulimia became a sort of coping mechanism for me. It ended up not being so much

about food as it did about control. I was dealing with a lot of stress later on in school. I had the difficult career choice to make, I had men who could father me hitting on me, (my size did not help matters in this regard), and there was the domestic issue of dealing with the chronic illness of a beloved sibling. There were lots of things in my life that I just wasn't able to manage. I'd binge and get a rush from eating so much food. Then I'd get an even bigger, better rush after getting rid of it all.

### Not just weight control

My parents were very distracted at this time. My brother's ailment had taken its toll on them and so it was easy for them to have missed my bulimia. Coincidentally, I had to leave home for university about a few months after I started purging and at my uncle's house where I had to live in my first two years in the university, it was easy to go unnoticed. Nobody seemed to notice my bulimia. Or if they did, they didn't say anything. At one point during my first year of university, I got down to just 115 pounds on my nearly 5'7 frame.

There were so many changes that came along with moving away from home, attending



## HER STORY

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lectures and dealing with life mostly on my own for the first time. I was bingeing and purging daily.

My mum was alarmed when I returned home on the first school holiday. She complained to my dad that my uncle's wife must be starving me and that being very introverted in nature; I am not the type that will ask for food if I'm not offered. I felt sorry for my aunt who was nothing but nice to me.

Sometimes I'd complete the binge-purge cycle multiple times a day. I remember going on a field trip with some course mates and desperately looking for a bathroom after eating too much cake. I remember being in the hotel room I shared with a course mate, after eating a box of chocolates and waiting and praying desperately for the girl to step out so I could purge. I will run all the taps at once and make a lot of noise in the bathroom to prevent her from hearing what was really going on down there. It got to the point where I

wouldn't really binge, either. I'd purge after eating normal-sized meals and even snacks.

I would go through good periods and bad periods. Sometimes weeks or even several months would go by when I'd barely purge at all. And then there'd be other times — usually when I had added stress, — when bulimia would rear its ugly head. I remember purging after breakfast on the day of my convocation. I remember having a very bad period of purging during my compulsory National Youth Service Corp.

Again, it was often about control, coping. A lot was going on in my life that I couldn't control, but I could control this one aspect.

### Ten years, later

The long term effects of bulimia aren't completely known, but the ones known are frightening enough. Complications range from cardiovascular diseases, blood pressure abnormalities, gastrointestinal distress,

constipation, indigestion, heartburn, tooth decay, irregular periods and even depression. I had a fair share of most of these complications, but at this point I could not stop myself despite being afraid about what it was doing to my body. I remember blacking out upon standing quite often during my bad periods of bulimia. Looking back, it seems incredibly dangerous.

My then fiancé was the first to notice and I eventually confided in him. He encouraged me to speak with a doctor, which I did, albeit briefly. My own path to recovery was long because I tried doing much of it on my own. It ended up being two steps forward, one step back.

I knew I had to take my recovery process seriously when the complication of depression became very serious. I was surviving on antidepressants and had on two occasions being hospitalized for episodes of depression.

Recovery was a slow process for me, but I can confidently say I am free from bulimia now. Yes, I have gone back to being "the fat woman" but I am a beautiful and healthy fat woman. The last time I purged was when I was 25. That's 10 years of my life plagued with this draining eating disorder. The episodes were infrequent by then, and I had learned some skills to help me deal better with stress.



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*Your memory book should be filled with important moments in your life and not memories of your eating disorder.*

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I now exercise regularly, and have discovered exercise lifts my moods and helps me work through things that are bothering me. I also have developed a love for writing and cooking healthy meals. I read my bible daily and the comfort contained therein is better experienced than imagined.

The complications of bulimia go beyond the physical. I can't get back the decade or so I spent in the throes of bulimia. During that time, my thoughts were consumed with bingeing and purging. So many important moments of my life are tainted with memories of purging. I wish I could turn back the hand of those times.

### **Don't let the world rush you**

The fashion, modeling and advertising industries have constantly made women feel they have to be a certain body type in order to be considered beautiful. Don't let the world mold you to its standards. A wise man once said, "do not read beauty magazines, it would only make you feel ugly." While it is good to maintain a healthy weight for a longer and healthier life, you can be beautiful no matter the number on your dress tag or result of the scale while standing on it.

### **Seek help**

If you're dealing with any eating disorder, please seek help urgently. You don't have to wait. You can do it today. Don't let yourself live with an eating disorder for another week, month, or year. Eating disorders like bulimia are often not just about losing weight. They also revolve around issues of control or negative thoughts, like having a poor self-image. Learning healthy coping mechanisms can help.

Admitting that you have a problem is the first step. Be determined to break the cycle. A trusted friend or doctor can help

you get on your way to recovery. The steps to recovery is not all easy, you may feel embarrassed at relapses, but do not give up even when you fail every now and then. You may feel you can recover on your own, but from experience, this is quite unlikely. Stay strong, seek help and cultivate healthy lifestyles.

Your memory book should be filled with important moments in your life and not memories of your eating disorder.

“

*Admitting that you have a problem is the first step and be determined to break the cycle.*





# MAKING LIFE COUNT FOR OTHERS

is a firm believer of being a blessing to others. She once said, “if I can save a soul and make people happy, I feel super happy.” Alice Eduardo is not all glitz and glamour although she epitomizes these at every turn, however she also devotes her time to her advocacies.

Alice Eduardo feels that her success is God-given, so she shares its fruits to the people who need help the most. An extraordinary person with an exceptional opportunity, she said, “Every day, I count my blessings, and I try to make my blessings count.”

Alice Eduardo has several passion projects, one of the most important of which is the 320 sqm. pediatric ward at the Philippine General Hospital. This has been a passion project because her father, Andres, suffered from cancer as well.

Called the Department of Pediatrics-Hematology-Oncology Isolation Ward, it caters to the young cancer patients. Building hope for these patients is a must, and this is her goal.

The ward is mainly for children with cancer from poor and disadvantaged families - the poorest of the poor. These people cannot afford expensive medicines and treatments.

She saw the situation of the kids by herself when visiting the illness-stricken child of one of her employees in PGH. Right there and then, she told herself, "Charity cannot wait." Compassion is the answer.

Paying it forward, many are inspired by her donations in PGH, spawning several other donations. Nevertheless, she knows that this is not enough.

Another equally important need is the relatives' dormitory because some of the patients' are from outside Metro Manila. Alice Eduardo's hometown is Jaen, Nueva Ecija. And coming from a Catholic family, she knows the importance of valuing places of worship. Building the church is another passion project she dubbed as the "monument of thanksgiving."

Alice Eduardo is one of GoNegosyo's stalwart partners. GoNegosyo is a program under the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship. Local entrepreneurs are the target of the program.



*if I can save a soul and make people happy, I feel super happy.*

She speaks at GoNegosyo-sponsored summits and conferences, sharing her entrepreneurial journey with the aspiring Filipinas. She also conducts mentoring sessions. Alice Eduardo is also a prime mover for Habitat for Humanity since 2011 (PhP10M). She has also donated an aggregate amount of PhP5M to Marawi survivors.

Her other philanthropic activities include;

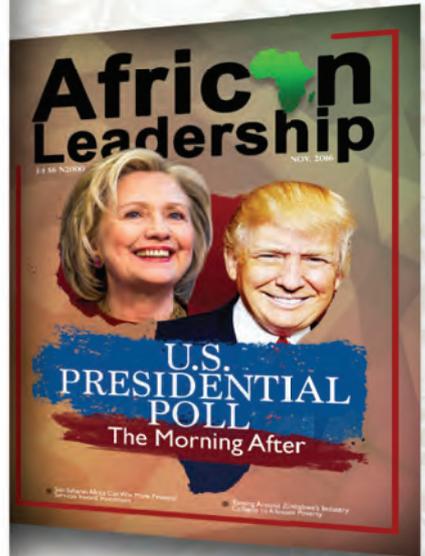
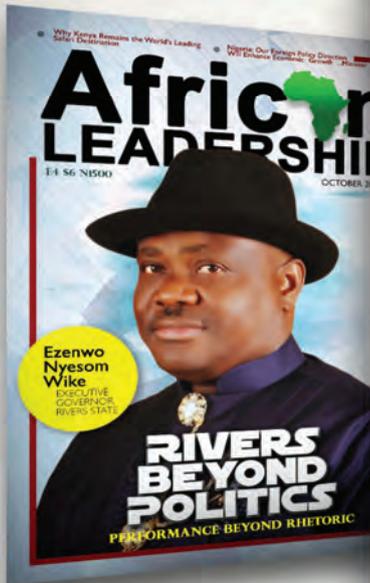
- Building 100 homes for Yolanda victims (PhP10M)
- Building San Agustin Parish with parish hall in Jaen, Nueva Ecija (PhP80M)

Building two structures at Tuloy Foundation for its classrooms and theater (PhP20M)

What's good about this construction magnate is she doesn't trumpet her charities.

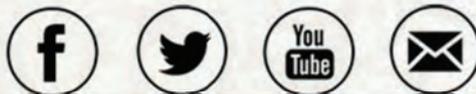


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*ABSA Woman Empowerment Fund  
Gender Diversity in Corporate Leadership*



**United Bank for Africa Plc Programs**  
*Ruby Premium Current Account  
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**Standard Chartered Bank Programs**  
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**First Women Bank Limited (FWBL)**

**First Women Bank Limited - Karachi, Pakistan Programs**  
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Gender Diversity in Corporate Leadership  
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Literacy programs for Women*



**Ahli United Bank B.S.C. (AUB) - Kuwait Programs**  
*Gender Diversity - Corporate Leadership  
Supports Women Tech Makers Kuwait  
Supports Bahrain Society for Women Development (BSWD)*

# CONVERSATION STARTERS TO REVIVE A RELATIONSHIP

- By Dr. Nisha Khana



*Effective communication is based on the way we talk and listen, how we respond as well as our body language.*

In a relationship when communication starts to fade, everything else follows. In effective communication, there is 65% role of non-verbal gestures and 35% role verbal gestures. Effective communication is based on the way we talk and listen, how we respond as well as our body language. Open and honest communication should be part of every healthy relationship; it should be practical, factual, concise, clear and persuasive.

After you've been with your partner for a while, it can sometimes, feel like you've talked about everything, and thus have nothing creative, interesting, or important left to say. In such a situation there is no need to panic, below mentioned are a few conversation starters that can help you revive your relationship.

## Needs in the Relationship

Discussing both personal and the relationship needs is a must. These needs can be social, physical, emotional, financial etc. Sometimes there are a few needs of a partner which he/she thinks about but does not express which can make the couple grow apart. One person may lack on this area as some people are naturally reclusive. At times, people do not know how to communicate what they feel or how they feel.

Expressing these needs could further strengthen the bond between the couple.

## Intimacy

Intimacy is extremely important for a healthy relationship. Usually couples do not discuss about this topic. Intimacy does not only mean physical closeness but also

emotional. It fosters closeness, love and affection between couples. It enhances trust and a stronger sense of companionship between couples.

Issues with an intimate life can create big gaps between couples, whether it's about lack of desire, interest or not getting what they desire for. A couple should always talk about this and move forward to improve upon the parts where they are lacking individually. Many times when the couples do not have a great intimate life, they wander places to look for the same. This sometimes also leads to affairs and cheating.

## Compliment your Partner

Complimenting your partner often breaks the ice if there is tension and generally makes the partner feel good. It helps boost their confidence and self-esteem. Compliments are even more charming when it is unexpected. Make sure that the compliment

is not always generic like about their eyes , but rather highlight something related to their personality. This will show that you are concerned with more than just their looks.

**Take a Walk Down the Memory Lane**

Due to the lifestyle we lead in the modern world, we do not have time to sit back and talk about the positive things in our lives. Talk about the happy memories you had as a couple, reliving those happy moments always lightens up the atmosphere. Talk about the best dinner you had, movies, vacation, reunions, etc. Just talk.

**Plan a Vacation**

Sometimes all a couple is lacking in their relationship is quality time. Most couples are so busy with their own work that they don't give proper time to their partners or themselves. The whole process of planning a vacation brings the couple closer and increases the bonding. When on vacation, the couple gives each other undivided attention and love which could help bring back the missing spark in the relationship. Some couples have trouble in their intimate lives when they are busy with work, vacationing together can help a lot in that aspect.



*Intimacy does not only mean physical closeness but also emotional. It fosters closeness, love and affection between couples.*

**Discussions about Likes and dislikes**

Though most couples are aware of their partner's likes or dislikes, they rarely acknowledge them and this can breed a feeling of not being loved. For instance, your partner might love to eat Italian food while you prefer Asian cuisine. Both partners should discuss all likes and dislikes and be accommodating of this when making decisions as a couple. If they consider the likes of their partner and act accordingly, the relationship will become healthier. Both partners should make sure that these discussions should be positive and pleasant, not argumentative.

**Hobbies**

Partners should discuss their hobbies with each other. These hobbies could be cooking, watching movies, reading books, listening to music, etc. They should also ensure or make efforts of performing these hobbies together. You can go for a movie night, enjoy dinner with your partner with a cuisine of their choice, plan surprise dates in your partners favorite spot and just generally be spontaneous in the relationship.

**Family and Friends**

Couples must discuss about their respective families. Giving your partner a glimpse into your background will generally help them to understand you better. Sometimes we are very good

with each other but are unable to have a working or healthy relationship with family members of our partner. Partners must not only discuss their family and friends but also be pally with them. They should regularly meet each other's loved ones. This can also contribute to a healthy social life which is extremely important as it increases bonding and love between couples.

**Solutions to Conflicts**

Talk about how conflicts arise when there is a problem and you need to resolve it. Conflict is inevitable in any relationship, but how couples communicate during a conflict goes a long way towards determining whether the problem will be resolved or if it will continue to fester and spoil the relationship.

All kinds of problems have different kinds of ways to work around them, problems that threaten the continuation of the relationship, such as infidelity or lack of intimacy, need to be approached quite differently than minor problems like leaving a wet towel on the bed. Before you raise an issue with your partner, consider carefully what it is that you're really upset about. You can't solve underlying intimacy issues if you fly off the handle each time your wife leaves the toothpaste cap open. Talking about issues and solutions to the issues, will help the relationship to continue smoothly and last long.



### Life Goals

This is a long term discussion but makes for a great conversation starter and gives clarity to the relationship. These goals can be about their career, family , financial priorities, etc. Both partners will have different life goals, discussing them and accepting them is a very important step in the relationship. Discussing them in a healthy manner can also prevent disagreements in the future. Under this topic, could also come talking about their goals as a couple. Where they see this relationship going, what they expect the future to be, if they see each other together after 10 years from now, and so on.

### Self Image

In this the couple can talk about, how they feel about themselves. The questions they can ask one another are, how would they describe themselves, how do they think you see them, do they think they have trust issues or feel insecure about something, how important do they think self-care is, do they think they are self sufficient, what are their strengths and weaknesses, in what aspects of their lives can they or want to improve and how do they want to work on those , what according to them is their self worth or value and several other similar questions. It is extremely important for your partner to know how you picture yourself in your mind.

### Financial Management

The areas of discussions and questions under this subject matter could be, Are they spenders or savers? What do they generally like to spend or save more on? Do they have budgets and if yes, then what are they for and how true are they too their budgets? Do they responsibly pay their bills on time ? Do they consider movies or vacations and other leisure activities a necessity or a luxury? Do they have debts they owe to people? What are their financial goals?

### Division of Role

Implementing a flexible arrangement for men's and women's roles in the household can contribute to the happiness of the family members. The idea is that both men and women have equal responsibilities in the household as well as earn money and to participate actively within the community. This is one of the most common topics which a couple can argue about.

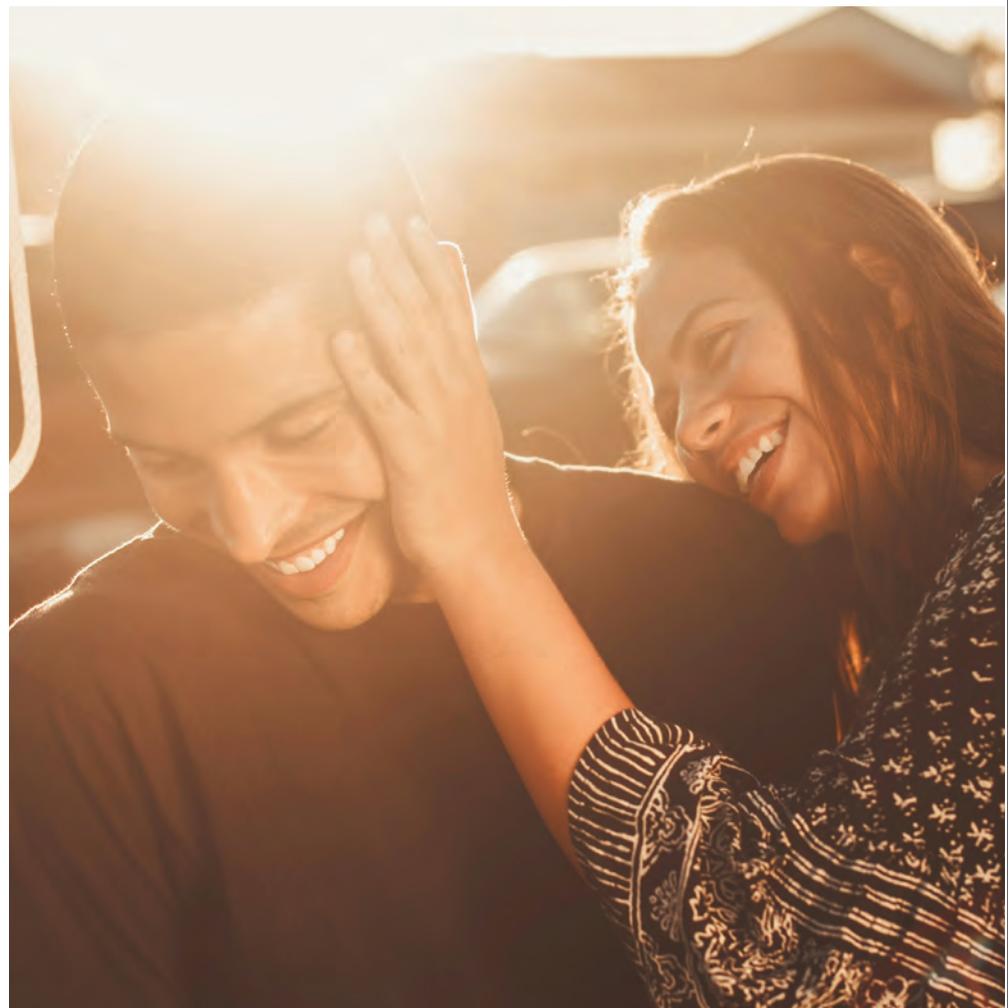
### Spiritual Roles

Strong religious and spiritual values are important. Both the individuals can have different spiritual beliefs, in this case the other person should be accepting and encouraging of the same. Individuals should respect this difference. Apart from accepting, partners should also actively participate in their

partners lives, especially when traditions are involve, this well help the couple build a strong union.

Along with these conversation starters, for an effective and positive outcome of the conversations, there are a few things you need to keep in mind like; be honest, Give your partner your full attention, make yourself and your partner comfortable in all ways, maintain eye contact with your partner while discussing, encourage your partner to share their perception as well, don't interrupt when they are putting their point forward.

If at any point during the conversation, there is an intuition that the matter is taking a negative turn, lower your tone or ask respectfully to continue the discussions when you are both calmer.





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# THE INVENTIVE & TRAILBLAZING CAREER OF **PATRICIA BATH**

- By Emekpo Charles



Patricia Era Bath, a prominent ophthalmologist, and innovative research and laser scientist, is the first African American woman physician to receive a patent for a medical invention.

She was born on November 4, 1942 in Harlem New York to Rupert Bath, a Trinidadian immigrant and the first black motorman in the New York City subway system, and Gladys Rupert, a domestic worker. In 1959 while in high school at Charles Evans Hughes, she received a grant from the National Science Foundation to attend the Summer Institute in Biomedical Science at Yeshiva University. There, she studied the relationship between stress, nutrition, and cancer. In 1964, Bath graduated from Hunter College in New York

City with a B.S. in chemistry. Four years later, she received her medical degree from Howard University Medical School in Washington, D.C. She has four patents to her name and founded the non-profit American Institute for the Prevention of Blindness in Washington, D.C.

Bath married and had a daughter, Erika in 1972. While motherhood became her priority, she also managed to complete a fellowship in corneal transplantation and keratoprosthesis (replacing the human cornea with an artificial one).

Patricia Era Bath's dedication to a life in medicine began in childhood. She was inspired by Dr. Albert Schweitzer's service to lepers in

the Congo. The start of Bath's medical career has been one that broke many racial and gender grounds. From 1970 to 1973, she completed her training at New York University School of Medicine as the first African American resident in ophthalmology. While a young intern at Harlem Hospital and Columbia University, Bath noticed the contrast between the eye clinic of Harlem where half of the patients were visually impaired or blind in Columbia, where only a few patients suffered from blindness. Because of this, Bath conducted a study and found that blindness among blacks was high compared to the white due to lack of proper eye care facilities in black communities. In an attempt to remedy this alarming problem, she proposed a new worldwide system known as community ophthalmology in which trained eye care volunteers visit senior centers and day care programs to test the vision and screen for cataracts, glaucoma, and other serious eye conditions. Through this community outreach program, underserved populations whose eye conditions would have gone untreated have a better chance to prevent blindness.



*Bath was also instrumental in bringing ophthalmic surgical services to Harlem Hospital's Eye Clinic, which did not perform eye surgery in 1968*

She reached the conclusion that the high prevalence of blindness among blacks was due to lack of access to ophthalmic care. As a result, she proposed a new discipline, known as community ophthalmology, which is now operative worldwide. Community ophthalmology combines aspects of public health, community medicine, and clinical ophthalmology to offer primary care to underserved populations. Volunteers trained as eye workers visit senior centers and daycare programs to test vision and screen for cataracts, glaucoma, and other threatening eye conditions. This outreach has saved the sight of thousands whose problems would have gone undiagnosed and untreated. By identifying children who need eyeglasses, the volunteers give these children a better chance for success in school. Bath was also instrumental in bringing ophthalmic surgical services to Harlem Hospital's Eye Clinic, which did not perform eye surgery in 1968. She persuaded her professors at Columbia to operate on blind patients for free, and she volunteered as an assistant surgeon. The first major eye operation at Harlem Hospital was performed in 1970 as a result of her efforts.

Bath joined the faculty of UCLA and Charles R. Drew University in 1974 as an assistant professor of surgery (Drew) and ophthalmology (UCLA). The following year she became the first woman faculty member in the Department of Ophthalmology at UCLA's Jules Stein Eye Institute. As she notes, when she became the first woman faculty in the department, she was offered an office "in the basement next to the lab animals." She refused the spot. "I didn't say it was racist or sexist. I said it was inappropriate and succeeded in getting acceptable office space. I decided I was just going to do my work." By 1983 she was chair of the ophthalmology residency training program at Drew-UCLA, the first woman in the USA to hold such position.

Despite university policies extolling equality and condemning discrimination, Professor Bath experienced numerous instances of sexism and racism throughout her tenure at both UCLA and Drew. Determined that her research will not be obstructed by the "glass ceilings," she took her research abroad to Europe. Free at last from the toxic constraints of sexism and racism her research



## TRAIL BLAZER

was accepted on its merits at the Laser Medical Center of Berlin, West Germany, the Rothschild Eye Institute of Paris, France, and the Loughborough Institute of Technology, England. At those institutions, she achieved her “personal best” in research and laser science, the fruits of which are evidenced by her laser patents on eye surgery.

Bath’s work and interests, however, have always gone beyond the confines of the university. In 1977, she and three other colleagues founded the American Institute for the Prevention of Blindness, an organization whose mission is to protect, preserve, and restore the gift of sight. The AIPB is based on the principle that eyesight is a basic human right and that primary eye care must be made available to all people, everywhere, regardless of their economic status. Much of the work of the AIPB is done through ophthalmic assistants, who are trained in programs at major universities. The institute supports global initiatives to provide newborn infants with protective anti-infection eye drops, to ensure that children who are malnourished receive vitamin A supplements essential for vision and to vaccinate children against diseases (such as measles) that can lead to blindness.

As director of AIPB, Bath has traveled widely. On these travels, she has performed surgery, taught new medical techniques, donated equipment, lectured, met with colleagues, and witnessed the disparity in health services available in industrial and developing countries.



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# AN OVERVIEW OF **MATERNAL** **EMPLOYMENT**



*For many women in Great Britain, the absence of choices concerning childcare poses a major problem in pursuing outside employment*

## **Extent and Effects of Maternal Employment**

During the past few decades the proportion of women in labor force has increased dramatically in all industrialized societies. In the United States, the married mothers' employment rate increased from 39.7 percent in 1970 to 70.1 percent in 1999 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000). Among mothers of children aged six to seventeen, 49.2 percent and 77.1 percent were employed in 1970 and 1999, respectively. Among mothers with children under the age of six, their employment rate doubled from 1970 (30.3%) to 1999 (61.8%). The increasing trend of maternal employment is seen in other industrialized countries such as Japan and Canada.

The above figures indicate that the majority of mothers in the United States experience dual roles of being a parent and a



paid worker. A number of studies also show that women still bear more responsibility for childcare than their male counterparts (e.g., Hochschild 1989). Working mothers, therefore, are engaged in a second shift of caring for their children and families upon returning from their first shift of paid work (Hochschild 1989). Since mothers are more likely to prepare their children for day care and school in the morning hours than fathers, working mothers, in reality, are engaged in three shifts combining family carework and paid work.

An increase of labor-force participation among mothers also suggests that being a mother—even of an infant—is no longer a major deterrent to women's employment (Moen

1992). According to Moen, the three types of mothers most likely to return to work before their infants are a year old are the young mother (a married mother under age twenty-four with a high school education), the delayed childbearer (a mother with at least some college education who postponed starting her family until after age twenty-four), and the unmarried mother (a white high school graduate who already has two or more children and has been divorced or separated). It should be noted, however, that although the American public has shown more acceptance of the employment of married women, the employment of mothers with young children has not enjoyed the same level of endorsement

(Moen 1992). This is largely due to beliefs that maternal employment has harmful effects on young children.

A number of studies in the early 1990s explored the effects of maternal employment on child outcomes but yielded inconsistent results. Whereas some studies reported that maternal employment was a negative influence on children's cognitive and social development, others found enhanced cognitive outcomes for children as a function of early maternal employment (Vandell and Ramanan 1992). Studies in late 1990s report that neither early maternal employment status nor the timing and continuity of maternal employment were consistently related to a child's developmental outcome (Harvey 1999). A few significant findings reported that mothers' working more hours in the first three years was associated with slightly lower vocabulary scores up through age nine (Harvey 1999). Among low-income adolescent mothers, maternal employment was also associated with their children's lower verbal development (Luster et al. 2000). However, maternal employment during the first year of the child's life is slightly more beneficial for the children of single mothers, and early parental employment was related to more positive child outcomes for low-income families (Harvey 1999).

Although these results suggest that maternal employment status has few negative effects on young children, other research in the 1990s reported some of the conditions under which maternal work makes a difference in family relations. For example, when mothers frequently engaged in shared activities with children such as reading books and telling stories, the potentially disruptive effects of changes in maternal employment status on children's social and cognitive competence were mitigated. Additionally, less secure attachment relationships

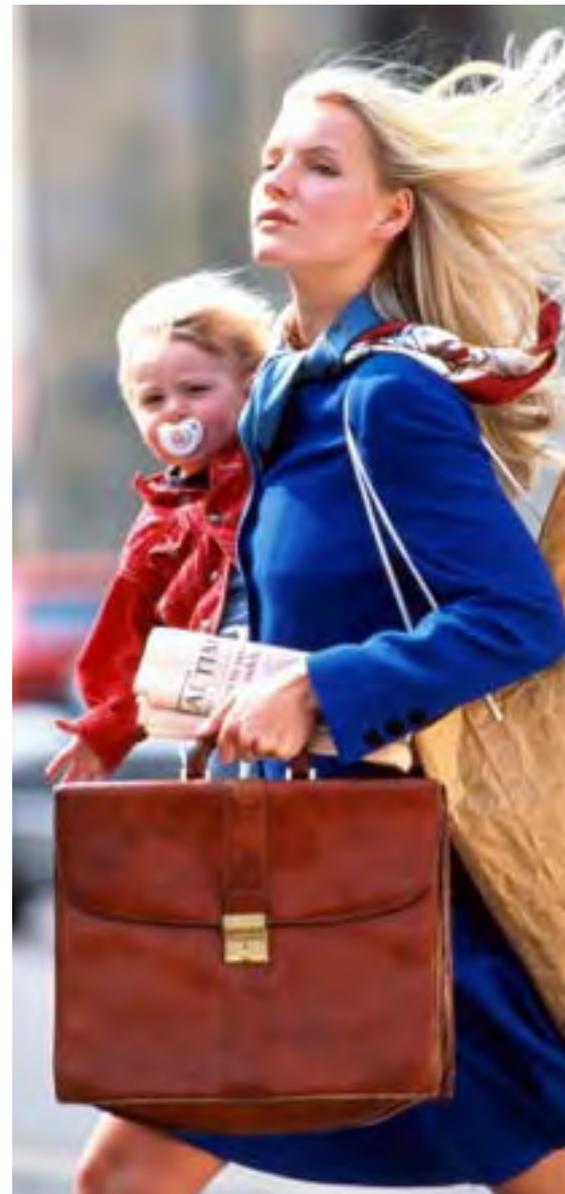
between mothers and children were more common when the quality of alternative childcare was poor and unstable (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network 1997).

The mothers' struggle of balancing work and family has also been reported in developing regions (such as Latin America), post-socialist regions (such as Russia), and industrialized countries (such as Great Britain and Japan). Helen Safa (1992), for example, reports that despite increased employment of married women in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, housework and childcare are still perceived as women's responsibility, even when they are making major contributions to the household economy. Similarly, for many women in Great Britain, the absence of choices concerning childcare poses a major problem in pursuing outside employment (MacLennan 1992). Compared to these countries, mothers in Nordic countries have a less stressful experience in balancing motherhood and paid work due to the comprehensive maternity-parental leave system in which parents of children under the age of one are financially supported for childcare by governmental policies (Haavio-Mannila and Kauppinen 1992). It should be noted, however, this does not mean that gender-based discrimination in the larger social context does not exist in Nordic countries as evidenced by gender segregation in the workplace.

Source: [family.jrank.org](http://family.jrank.org)



*An increase of labor-force participation among mothers also suggests that being a mother—even of an infant—is no longer a major deterrent to women's employment.*



# ELAINE LAN CHAO

## THE RELEVANT IMMIGRANT

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*Elaine Lan Chao continues to unleash her leadership potentials in the various political position of the United States Government. She did not get up the ladder without a fight, she had her fair share of apartheid struggles, but with the help of her parents', she was able to overcome and shine*



Elaine Chao was born in Taipei – Taiwan, the first and eldest child of her parents among six daughters. She migrated to the United States with her mother and two sisters at age eight. Before the migration, Elaine’s parents though Chinese lived in Taiwan. The political turmoil, societal upheaval, foreign invasions and civil war in China at that time resulted in so many hardships, instability, and uncertainty that caused many to leave the country in search of peace and safety.

Her parents first met in Shanghai during World War II In 1949, but got married in Taiwan, having relocated separately to the country. A few years later, Elaine’s father received a scholarship to further his studies abroad. He left for the USA and three years later his wife and three daughters, Elaine, Jeanette, and May to America. Life did not turn out so rosy, as the Chao family arrived America things became difficult, with no family or friends, settling in became a challenging experience. Elaine was enrolled in Syosset High School in Syosset, New York, on Long Island as a third-grader. The school was not fun as she could not communicate in English. She spent school days alone because she could not understand anything her teacher or the other students said. Having started off her early education in Chinese language, Elaine had been

accustomed to writing in the language.

Soon, she learned to speak and write in English with the help of her father who took out his evenings teaching his little daughter by patiently going back over each day’s lessons.

Against all odds, the family grew into a united and loving family and never lost their steadfast belief in the promise of America. James and Ruth were able to empower their girls to thrive in the new country with the hope of a better future. Both parents were an inspiration to their daughters, as they instilled in them the importance of family, faith, education, hard work, self-discipline, self-sacrifice, self-reliance, determination, service and contribution to their community and Society.

At age 19, Elaine was naturalized as a U.S. citizen, and in 1975 she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts, followed by an MBA degree from Harvard Business School in 1979.

Elaine did have her fair share of achievements, during her days at Harvard Business School, she was the first woman at Harvard to be elected class officer and class marshal. She was an active member of the finance club, the financial accounting club, the international business club, and the transportation club.

After her education, Elaine started her career in the banking industry, she rose to become Vice President for syndications at Bank of America Capital Markets Group in San Francisco, California. She also served as in international banker at the Citicorp in New York, before joining the United States Public Service sector, where she has served over twenty years.

Elaine has served in various platforms and position right from the presidency of Ronald Reagan over America and to this present President Donald Trump administration.

Despite the early struggles to fit in, this woman of colour has set the pace for other aspiring women in diaspora.



*Despite the early struggles to fit in, this woman of colour has set the pace for other aspiring women in diaspora.*





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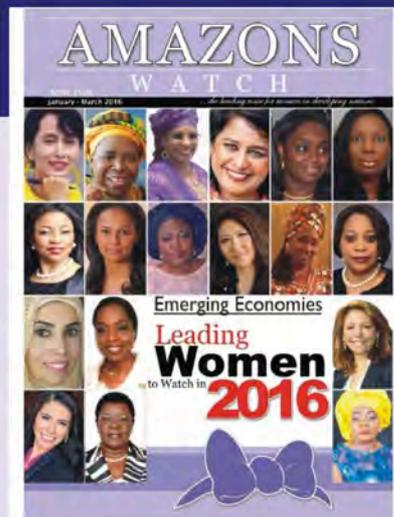
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