

OGHALE GINA CHUNU

Living & Ageing *gracefully*

...BY THE
POWER OF
GOD



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Living And Ageing Gracefully
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Living &
Ageing
gracefully
...by the power of God

DEDICATION



I dedicate this book to the Archbishop M. E. IDAHOSA, a renowned trailblazer of the Kingdom, who gave me the platform and enabled my dreams to take flight, and to my innumerable friends, fans, and well-wishers across the Globe.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT



I give the Almighty God, the Love of my life, all the glory, for His indescribable grace and mercy enabling me to be useful to all and sundry in my area of my calling.

My immeasurable gratitude to Dr. Chris Chunu (my Bobo for life) who gives me the impetus and the financial/moral support to make my dream come true, to Oghale Akpobome who stirred up my spirit to visit a book project that was long abandoned, and worked hard to see this dream become not just a reality, but upgraded, authentic and in tune with the times. Many thanks to Teajay Chunu for the cover design and other publishing touches. To Oreva, Tobor, Iwo, and Ese, who are ever ready at every beck and call for the final job. My cherished grandchildren aren't left out either. They make me proud.

Special thanks to Jennifer Ojieh and Blessed Ogbum, who did the maiden (initial) typesetting. Finally, to the indefatigable Rev. Ifoghale Efeturi and Osarugue Enehizena, for their efforts towards the update and final production.

May God reward you all immensely.

FOREWORD



It is with great joy that I write this foreword for Living & Ageing Gracefully...By the Power of God. This book is not just another title on ageing; it is a Spirit-inspired guide that reminds us that life, in all its seasons, is a gift from the Lord.

The Word of God tells us in Psalm 92:14 that "They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green." Ageing, therefore, is not something to fear, but a beautiful process to embrace with dignity, strength, and wisdom - if we do so under the hand of God.

In these pages, my daughter Oghale Gina Chunu has poured out wisdom, experience, and biblical principles that will help you live well and age well. She has shown us that to grow older is not to diminish, but to increase - in grace, in influence, and in impact. For many years

she led the women in morning exercises at our annual CWFI conventions, continuing her health drive and initiative.

The chapters of this book will lead you on a journey: from understanding the importance of how we live, to caring for the body, cultivating a vibrant mindset, strengthening your walk with God, and ultimately living a life of impact. These are timeless truths, needed in every generation.

I recommend this book wholeheartedly to everyone - young and old alike. To the younger, it offers a blueprint for building a life that will endure. To the older, it offers encouragement that your best years are never behind you, but always before you in Christ Jesus.

My prayer is that as you read, the Holy Spirit will breathe life into these words, and you will find renewed strength to live and to age gracefully, by the grace of God.

Remain Above only,

Archbishop Margaret E. Benson-Idahosa

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INTRODUCTION

WHY I WROTE THIS BOOK



In 2012, I was asked to write an article titled " AGEING gracefully by the power of God" for the CHRISTIAN WOMEN FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL (CWFI) yearly publication, a Magazine with its workbook covering different titles, enriching countless lives. The reason I was given the above title was simply because during such conventions and Pastors' Conferences, I was solely in charge of conducting the keep-fit exercises for all and sundry. People were always amazed at my passion and dexterity.

It was during these sessions, styled AEROBICS, that it dawned on many that age wasn't a barrier to my efficiency. I also had a group of men and women of renown from other denominations who were challenged to join the training sessions. The dance

steps for the aerobics were, "I will follow Him (JESUS) for the rest of my life" - the lyrics of a song by a popular singer then, which subsequently became my identity or nickname.

After writing the article for the CWFI publication, I decided that I was going to work on an expanded version of the article and develop it into a book that more people could read and benefit from. A book that would guide people on how they can live healthy lives and know that they can get old and still be relevant in life and in the things of God. I have come to realize that keeping fit is not just about the body, but also about the mind. In this book, I share about the kind of mindset I have cultivated and how it has helped me age gracefully and remain relevant in impacting the lives of others.

We do not determine how long we will live, but we can determine how well we will live. I strongly believe that it is God's ultimate delight that we age gracefully with strength, joy, and vitality. I believe that ageing is not something anyone should dread. Rather, it is something everyone should look ahead to with joy and excitement, because where we are going is better than where we are right now.

By the grace of God, I am 83 years old now, and I can tell you that indeed everything I am has been because of the grace of God. Many do not believe my age because of my looks, actions, energy, and impetus. In this book, I will also be showing you certain principles I have learned by the wisdom of God that I believe have helped me to live and age gracefully by the power of God. I am writing this book to let people know how true the things I have been teaching are, and to let them see how I am experiencing and manifesting them, so they too can experience and manifest them. I do hope you will enjoy reading this book as much as I enjoyed writing it.

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determine how long
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CHAPTER 1

WHY AND HOW ARE YOU LIVING?



Life is a gift from God. It is transient, temporary, and uncertain. It is like a vapour that vanishes away. According to the Bible, the duration or life span of any person ranges from 70 years and above (Psalms 90:10). But it's sad to see that a greater percentage of human beings die prematurely due to factors beyond our comprehension, some of which will be highlighted in this book.

Many people have checked out of this life due to accidents, natural disasters, murders, poisoning, demonic attack, etc. But one major factor that has led to the loss of many lives is ignorance as to how to preserve the body as God intended.

Let's ponder over God's creative ability and how wonderful the birth of a child is. From the mystery of

conception in the mother's womb, cells divide over a nine-month period. Finally, a baby is born glistening with liquid. Cells begin to work together, muscles jerking in movements, lungs and vocal cords work together in air-gulping yells.

This amazing journey from embryo to birth, with the mysterious growth of bones, tendons, and internal organs that give life, is enough to cause an outburst of praise to God. It is amazing that God knits together 350 soft and pliable bones for a newborn baby and fuses them together into about 206 for an adult. W-a-o-h!

The Bible declares,

"5 Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: 6 In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. 7 Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God."

Hebrews 10:5-7

We were destined to live and grow old gradually and gracefully. To experience this, we must take care of our body and use it to do the will of God.

Child of God, are you a surrendered vessel ready to be transformed for His use? That is the primary purpose you were created and consequently your ultimate assignment on planet earth.

FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE

God's thoughts are unseen like the wind – this impact stirs my heart. God created my personality, painting it with all the colours of a rainbow. God's love is like a warm, snug blanket surrounding me throughout my life for eternity. With such a retrospect, death or growing old (ageing) has no right to intimidate a focused-right living child of God. We are mortals whose journeys have an end, someday. When God created us, we were born with innocent, soft, pliable hearts. But sadly, life's painful experiences have resulted in many of us having hearts that are somewhat cold and rigid. But why is this so?

Don't Allow Life's Issues to Hurt and Harden Your Heart
Life has the potential to bring a degree of suffering.

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*We were destined
to live and grow old
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To experience this,
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Disappointment, abuse from the hands of others, loss, illness, and rejection can turn our hearts sour with resentment. Once bitterness takes root, it hardens our hearts. In such a case, please go to your Heavenly Father in humility and total surrender, asking Him to show you the unhealthy areas of your heart.

God has designed us to process suffering and pain His way by confessing and letting go of resentment, bitterness, unforgiveness, etc. He can heal our hard-wounded heart and give us a new heart of flesh. This will ultimately make us more like the people God designed us to be, with warm, loving hearts like Him.

Our Archbishop M. E. Benson Idahosa has so much to say on this. You can investigate her books. She is a rare gem, a woman I met in the late 60s. I can write volumes on this chosen vessel of God who is affecting lives globally against all odds in our generation. She exhorts with passion and love overflowing. You can check her age if you wish, and be challenged too.

DON'T BE DECEIVED BY THE WORLD'S VIEW OF LIFE

Society is psychotic (meaning out of touch with reality), and we are living in a world of illusion. We crave

for things we neither need nor enjoy, we buy things we do not want, just to impress people we do not like. Advertisers set out to make us feel ashamed if we do not wear designers' brands, have the most up-to-date gadgets, or eat in the fanciest restaurants. According to Shakespeare, the world is a stage where men and women are merely players.

To some, age is short-lived, while others live and die as centenarians. We all have three phases to go through in life: Beginning, Middle, and Ending. John Ploughman concluded this when he said, "Man is born crying, lives complaining, and dies disappointed. So, if life is full of care, we have no time to stand and stare." Mama Idahosa says "You shine your shine; I shine my shine." St Paul put it succinctly, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).

LIVE WITH WISDOM

Wisdom is the art of knowing what to overlook. Petty things steal too much of our time, and we finish up living for the wrong reasons. When an Olympic gold medalist was asked the secret of his success, he replied, "Planned neglect. Until my training period is completed, I deliberately neglect everything else."

If you say yes to every request or react to every situation, you will never succeed with what you were called to do. Take away the little foxes that spoil the vine. Drop those sins that easily beset you and run with hope. Jesus is at your destination, cheering you on.

Take a look at this story: Several years ago, 300 whales died mysteriously because they pursued a school of sardines and ended up marooned in a bay. The little ones lured the big ones into their deaths. By chasing small ends, they wasted their vast power and got an insignificant result. St Paul had it figured out. He said the most important thing to him was completing his mission (Acts 20:24).

One of the most interesting stories that came from the Titanic disaster was that of a wealthy woman who had a place in one of the lifeboats. Asking if she could return to her state-of-the-art room for something, she was given three minutes. Stepping over money and precious gems, littering her cabin floor, she grabbed three oranges and returned to the lifeboat. Circumstances transformed her value, and tragedy clarified her priorities. Go to God, and go for Gold (Heaven). Don't pursue shadows. We have only one life, and it is what is done for Christ that will last for eternity.

BE A GOOD STEWARD OF TIME

In "Tyranny of the Urgent" by Charles Hummel, he explained that we must know the difference between the urgent and the important, or else we would never become good stewards of our time. Our life is often ruled by the urgent because we have not taken the time to put things in their proper order of priority. Jesus, the great influencer of the world, never hurried, worried, nor flurried.

A little boy getting late to school prayed, "Lord, help me to be there on time. As he ran, he stumbled and fell. Lord, he said, I asked you to help me and not to push me". May God give us the same disciplined poise like Jesus had, so that even as the ageing process goes on, our lives can still challenge and inspire others, in Jesus Name, Amen.

GOD HAS PLACED HIS TREASURE IN US SO HE CAN USE US FOR HIS PURPOSE

We are not the treasure, but we have this TREASURE in us. Let's face it. God uses people we wouldn't use, like Rahab the harlot, Mary Magdalene, Saul of Tarsus, etc. God specializes in restoring broken vessels. He takes

things that aren't productive, marriages that don't work, as well as people with issues, and teaches them how to be victorious and fruitful in service. Knowing this gives us the strength and tenacity to face whatever comes because we know that when God places His treasure within us, He prizes, protects, and prospers it.

KEEP YOUR HEART PURE AND STAY STRONG IN FAITH

Listen, friend, Satan can't penetrate a heart that is pure, saturated in Scripture, and fortified by faith. Jesus told Peter, "I have prayed for you that your faith should not fail" (Luke 22:32).

It is your faith which is under attack that has to be fed and nurtured. Your faith sustains you in life's battles. Faith under attack is faith under construction. It is in the battle of life that you discover whether you have "nurtured" faith, or "neglected" faith.

God's word is all we need at all times if we must be strong in faith. We cannot rest upon our feelings or strangulate ourselves in the paralysis of analysis. We need a living faith to declare positively against satanic

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***Don't pursue shadows.
We have only one life,
and it is what is done
for Christ that
will last for eternity.***

”

assaults. It is surely God Himself who comes to us in the power of His beloved Son and strengthens us so that we realize that our bodies are surrounded by His power.

HAVING A VISION

Many of us are persuaded into believing far too little than for much. Vision is essential for survival. And a God-given vision is conceived by faith, sustained by prayer, and fueled by God's word. It is not about what you can do, but what God can do with your life when it is fully surrendered to Him. It encompasses things outside the realm of the predictable, the safe, and the expected.

Where there is no vision, the people perish (Prov. 29:18). If God has given you a vision, pursue it, and believe Him for greater things as you soar high on the wings of grace and longevity.

FACE ISSUES OF LIFE

A withdrawal from real issues is really a withdrawal from the spirit of Jesus. We must face reality. A real

person is someone who faces up to every issue in life and resists every temptation to adopt an escapist mentality. Salvation is God's way of making us real people. Growth in a Christian's life is progressive. Don't ever expect to reach a stage where you can say to yourself, "I have arrived."

Our ability to face anything depends largely on how close we are in the One Great Reality - Jesus Christ - The WORD MADE FLESH.

DEPEND ON GOD'S HELP TO FACE ISSUES

It is when we feel most separated from God that He teaches us the most. Dave Dravecky said,

"Looking back, I have learnt that the wilderness is part of the landscape of faith and every bit as essential as the mountain top. On the mountain top, we are overwhelmed by God's presence. In the wilderness, we are overwhelmed by His absence. Both places will bring us to our knees, the one in utter awe; the other in utter dependence. God doesn't show

up early. Usually, He comes in the worst part of the storm when you think you can't take any more, but He will always be on time. God can take us through different storms, revealing more of Himself to us in each one. Otherwise, there is an aspect of His Character and divine strategies we would never understand. God's presence is enough to calm our fears. Satan knows that a never-quitting and stubborn faith is his cemetery."

Claude Bristol wrote, "It is the constant and determined effort that breaks down all resistance and sweeps away all obstacles."

Friends, what do you do when you get a thorn in your flesh? You will focus on how to remove the hurt, right? Paul had this kind of problem, and he prayed three times for God's intervention; yet God had another plan. God is always at His strongest when we are at our weakest. Realizing that his life was tied to the thorn of affliction, he responded..... "I am contented with weakness, insult, hardship, persecutions and

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“I have arrived.”***

”

calamities" (2 Cor. 12:10). He was saying in effect..... "It is for my good, bring it on Lord." Can you say so in all circumstances? Yes, this is an antidote indeed for the uncertainties of life's predicaments.

Do you remember the prayer of the righteous Pharisee versus the Publican? (Luke 18:11) It was a prelude of grace, mercy, and compassion. We live in an appearance-driven society, and Jesus understood the danger that comes from focusing on looks instead of your spiritual orientation. Jesus specialized in ministering to the broken, the forgotten, the lost, and the lowly.

Never forget that while you are still a Christian, you will still struggle in certain areas. At such times, ask God to reveal behaviour patterns that are appearance-oriented instead of heart-oriented. You also need to surround yourself with transparent people who will lift you and encourage you when you fall, making you REAL. Frequent encounter with God makes you a champion from the inside - strong, able, active, lively, and a winner all the time (Phil. 4:13). You must also learn how to depend on the Holy Spirit. We can come short of nothing if the Holy Spirit is the Prime MOVER in our thoughts and lives.

AVOID WORRYING

Researchers have found that about 40% of the things we worry about never happen. 30% are in the past and can't be helped. 12% involve the affairs of others that are none of our business, 10% relate to sickness, real or imagined. That means, only 8% of our worries are likely to happen.

Scientists at Yale University have actually identified the "WORRY GENE," which, if inherited or not, can be overcome by God's grace. Worry, they say, is just interest paid on trouble before it comes due. Think about it. When you worry, there is a 92% chance you are paying interest on a debt that is not even yours. How sad.

It is recorded that there are 365 'FEAR NOTS' in the Holy Bible: one for every day of the year. When you worry, you doubt God and give the devil an entry into your life. For how long will you allow Satan to punctuate your life?

Our times are in God's hands (Psa. 31:15). This is why Moses reiterated in prayer, "So teach us to number our days" (Psa. 90:12).

RELAX IN GOD

There is an underlying law of wave mechanics. In accordance with it, our energy, emotions, and creativity ebb and flow consistently. Sometimes, we are on top of the mountain; other times, the mountain is on top of us. But whether at the peak or trough, God's laws of the kingdom are for our benefit (Eccl. 3:1-4). Relax, our Alpha and Omega determines the seasons of our life – Amen.

SELF-ESTEEM AND ACCEPTANCE

Do you have a healthy self-esteem? We have probably all coped admirably in a crisis, only to find that at other times, a small incident sets us into a spin and we feel that we are falling apart. It is as if everything holding us together (usually our self-worth) is beginning to disintegrate, and we become self-critical.

This is not how God designed us to be. The way we feel and perceive ourselves is often a distortion of God's view of us. We find our true worth in Him who created us like Himself. God delights in us and rejoices over us with singing (Zeph. 3:17). Halleluiah! The degrading names we sometimes call ourselves are not in His

vocabulary. Our emotional well-being depends upon us choosing to believe what God says about us. We are God's HEPHZIBAHS - crowns of splendour, royal diadems of His glory.

Child of God, Jesus has promised us peace that does not depend on conditions or circumstances. It comes from knowing that you are His child and that your Father controls the universe, loves you, and always has your best interest at heart. That's why people who have lost everything will often tell you they wouldn't trade what they've learnt in life even if it meant recouping all their losses.

Joni Erikson Tada discovered a supernatural peace when an accident confined her to a wheelchair, and Corrie Ten Boom found it in a Nazi death camp. Missionary Elizabeth Elliot found it ministering to the Indian tribe that had massacred her husband. She wrote, "Only in acceptance lies peace, not in resignation. Resignation says, "I am alone" but acceptance says," I belong to you, Lord". Acceptance rises to meet the God who fills the Universe with purpose and destiny. Resignation lies down quietly in an empty universe, opined Author Creath Davis. So, choose your growth and ageing route NOW.

LIVE WITH THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF ETERNITY

Do you realize that an accident, a blocked artery, a stray bullet, a plane with engine failure, a bomb blast, or a drunk driver, could take you out in an instant? WISE up. The question is not will you die, but, when? And where will you go after you die?

In 2 Samuel 3:33, king David asked, "Did Abner die as a fool?" This is because Abner knew what to do but failed to do it. He died at the gate of the City of Refuge. Why did he not run inside? Likewise, in the story of the rich fool in Luke 12:20; the man had planned for time, but not for eternity. He thought about himself, but not God. He paid attention to his body, but not to his soul.

It is said that the average body has enough phosphorus to make eight hundred thousand match heads, enough sugar to go into sixty cubes, enough salt to cover twenty spoons, and enough iron to make about Ten Dollars' worth of nails. The rest is dust and water. When you pamper, protect, and promote the part of you that will only live seventy or eighty years and neglect the part of you that will live in either Heaven or Hell; God says you are a FOOL. The man told himself he had so many years, but God said, "This night, thy soul shall be required of thee."

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The rules of the Father's house seem too restrictive. So many people want Christ's love, but not His Lordship, His blessings, but not His commandments. It is not that He offers them too little, but that the cost of serving Him seems too high. After all, today's heroes are people who go from poor to rich, rather than those who give up their riches to become voluntarily poor. Hence, covetousness is termed "ambition", hoarding is regarded as "prudent", and greed is defined as "being industrious".

Hey! The world is squeezing us into its mould. No heart is pure that is not passionate, no virtue safe that is not enthusiastic, no life Christian that is not Christianizing. Please, mount up your spiritual antennae 24/7. Enjoy all the things of life with godly wisdom and choices. Reappraise, repackage or rebrand yourself with your simple but cute poise and elegance. Watch what you eat (when and how), eat to live, and don't live to eat.

Here's what King David said in Psalms 39:4;

*"LORD, make me to know mine end,
and the measure of my days, what it is;
that I may know how frail I am."*

Can you make this your prayer? I sincerely hope so. I dare to say that true Christians don't die. It is simply good night here, and good morning there. Only death can die, because it is swallowed up in victory. 1 Cor. 15:54-55. Halleluiah!

LIVE!

A poet wrote that there was a very cautious man who never laughed or played, he never risked or tried, he never sang or prayed. And when one day he passed away, his insurance was denied: for since he never really lived, they claimed, he never died.

Dear reader, I implore you: choose to grow old gracefully by God's power, live for Christ, and die for gain. See you at the Top!

CHAPTER 2

AGEING AND TAKING CARE OF YOUR BODY



MY THOUGHTS ABOUT 'AGE'

What is age to you? In Psalm 39:5, we see that age means nothing to God. "Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity. Selah."

Interestingly, in Joshua 13:1, it was God who reminded Joshua that he had quit the stage too early when there were more lands to conquer. In other words, age has no barrier to fulfilling life's purposes/vision. God renews our years like that of the eagle. No matter your age, you've got to break boundaries and move ahead.

No matter how well, how rich, or how literate you may be, ageing is a reality. In a certain survey, people over

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***No matter your age,
you've got to break
boundaries and
move ahead.***

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90 years were asked, "If you have your life to live over, what would you do differently?"

Three answers consistently re-emerged:

1. I will spend more time with my family and friends.
2. I will take more risks.
3. I will do things that will live long after I'm gone.

This is one reason why you should live your life for God's purpose and according to God's will.

Proverbs 20:29 says,

"The glory of old men is wisdom and experience."

Time has a way of catching you unawares. You find yourself saying,

"It seems like yesterday I was young, got married and embarked on my new life. Where did the years go? I know I have lived them all and I get glimpses of how it was back then - my hopes and dreams. But here it is the evening of my life. How did I get here so fast? I remember seeing old folks and thinking less of age. I

couldn't fathom or imagine it. But here it is, my friends are retired and getting grey and more careful than ever. I see great changes. I remember when we were young and vibrant, now we are the old folks we never thought we would become. Each day, age unfolds the reality of life as I find it difficult to go, do, or say whatever is in my mind."

GOD STRENGTHENS US AND HELPS US AGE GRACEFULLY

God promised Abraham, "I am your unfailing, inexhaustible, ever-increasing source of supply." He carries us on eagle's wings, protects us, and provides for us even with our hoary hairs. Check out Mama Ekperigin for ageing looks. Hallelujah! No wonder Prophet Isaiah reiterates,

"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: ut they that wait upon the

LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

Isaiah 40:29-31

AGEING IS INEVITABLE

The spirit could be willing, but what about the body? If you are not there yet, let me remind you, it will surely come; wait for it. It is sooner than you can picture. So, whatever you would like to accomplish in your life, do it today, don't prolong the evil day because you can never be sure of the next moment. There is no guarantee you will see every season of life, so say all the things you want your loved ones to remember, make hay while the sun shines because "tick says the clock, tick, tick, what you have to do, do quick".

YOU CAN ACHIEVE GREAT THINGS, NO MATTER YOUR AGE

Take heart, friend. Abraham Maslow's self-actualization theory posits that we strive to achieve our inner potentials to the satisfaction of our life's

basic needs, and this is a continual process that a person must acknowledge at all times. In the inspirational words of Barbara de Angelis, "No matter what age you are or what your circumstance may be, you are SPECIAL and you always have something UNIQUE to offer: your life has meaning".

Great things in life can be accomplished at any age. Here is a list of certain people who achieved great things in their old age:

1. Emmanuel Kani, wrote his finest Philosophical works at age 74,
2. Goethe - a German Poet/Dramatist and Novelist was 80 when he wrote "Crossing the Bar."
3. Michael Angelo completed what may have been his greatest work at age 87.
4. At age 90, Justice Holmes was still writing brilliant American Supreme Court Opinions.
5. George Dawson learnt to read at age 98. He was forced to quit school when he was a small child in order to help support his family. He said he got tired of writing his name with X. Four years later, at age 102, he co-authored his autobiography.

In the words of Steve Goodier, "Dreams are renewable indeed." So, no matter your age, you can breathe new life into old dreams. We have to renew our dreams or else they will wither away very fast.

TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY

In order to increase our chances of achieving and fulfilling our dreams, we must be willing to take good care of our bodies.

Take a look at this: Dr. Lawal of SPDC in 'Shell World Magazine', October 2011 edition, gave the following ABC of sudden, untimely, and unexpected death.

Do you know that:

- 70% occur at middle age before age 70.
- 70% are from the middle- and upper-income class, who, to laymen, looked well.
- 70% are executives who were constantly under stress.
- 70% are males.
- 70% are due to Hypertension and Heart Attack.
- 70% occur outside the reach of medical help, e.g. hospital.

- 70% often have no previous medically diagnosed heart or blood vessel diseases (as post-mortem studies have shown).
- 70% could be prevented by increasing public awareness through public health education and regular annual medical examination.

In order to enjoy a long-life expectancy, you must be ready to implement the following 4 Rules:

(1) **KEEP FIT:**

- a) Take more exercise
- b) Keep a healthy weight

Your body is the baggage you must carry through life. The more excess in the baggage, the shorter the trip.

(2) **EAT HEALTHY DIET:**

- (a) Reduce total fat in your diet, especially saturated fat.
- (b) Eat more fish, vegetables, and fruit.

(3) **LOOK AFTER YOURSELF:**

- a) Check your blood sugar.

- b) Take time to relax to reduce stress.
- c) Don't smoke.
- d) Reduce your alcohol intake.

(4) ATTEND PERIODIC MEDICAL EXAMINATION:

Especially pre-leave medical. When last did you have one?

A major key to ageing gracefully is maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The above rules are things I have done my best to adhere to, and of a truth, to the glory of God, they have been of immense benefit to my health and wholeness. You can make or mar your life by the kind of choices you make. I believe you are reading this book because you want to make the right choices that will better your life and make you age gracefully. My book titled 'Healthy Lifestyle To Stop Ageing' will also be of great help to you.

THE STORY OF MY EARLY RETIREMENT

A major reason why many people do not age gracefully is because of stress. I want to tell you a story about why I decided to retire from my job as a teacher quite early and the impact that decision had on my life.

gracefully

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*In order to increase
our chances of achieving
and fulfilling our dreams,
we must be willing to take
good care of our bodies.*

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My husband looked at me and began to notice that I was overworking myself, and I was getting stressed. Because of this, I was no longer as beautiful as I used to be. He couldn't take it anymore, and he told me I had to resign from my job. I however, refused to resign because I really loved and was enjoying my job. I was making so much impact on the lives of my students that I didn't want anything or anyone to stop me from doing this. In chapter 4, I have written more about this.

My husband did not give up on telling me to resign. He compelled me to end in 1993, I voluntarily decided to resign. It was a tough decision to make, but I had to do it. You wouldn't believe the kind of impact that this decision had on my life. I became calmer and everyone around me began to tell me I was looking more beautiful. In fact, something very interesting happened. There was a portrait artist called Chamberlain who drew a portrait of me while I was still working. When he was done, nobody agreed it was my picture, because the portrait was looking more beautiful than me. But guess what; a few months after I retired, I began to look exactly like what Chamberlain had drawn in that portrait. It was like he was a prophet who foretold how I was going to look after I retired.

Due to the fact that I was no longer under so much stress, my health and countenance began to flourish and blossom. My children and everyone around me began to enjoy me and comment about how much I had changed. Due to how much I was excelling, I wanted to continue working as a teacher, but the work was eating me up, and I didn't realize it. I honestly do not know how many more years I would have lasted if I didn't retire when I did. Controlling your stress levels is very vital for living long and ageing gracefully. You do not have to work yourself to death. This is a very good example of a decision one can make that can lead to living longer and healthier.

THINGS I'M DOING CURRENTLY

Despite the fact that I retired from my job as a teacher, I still live a very healthy and active life. I engage in a lot of meaningful and impactful activities.

My husband has a fish farm, so, I work closely with him in rearing the fish. I assist him with things like grading of the fish; a very hectic process. I also work as the treasurer and financial secretary for his fish farm. I also assist my husband with planting different

vegetables like ugwu on his farm. We also grow banana, plantain, and other crops and many times we have people coming to our compound to pluck fruits and enjoy themselves. I also do a lot of cooking and eating too! Until recently, when we occasionally have someone to help out around the house, I have been doing most of the house chores like cooking, laundry, sweeping, etc – termed DIY for my husband and I.

I am one of the Sunday teachers in my Church and I also join the monthly evangelism scheduled. At the CWFI meetings on alternative Tuesdays, where possible, I chip in some health tit-bits. Just like I am doing with this book, everywhere I find myself, I do my best to encourage people to do things that will make them healthy.

In addition to all the above, I do not miss my morning aerobics. I engage in keep-fit exercises every single day. In the next chapter, I will share some more on certain other activities I engage in. You can see how active I am living, though I am above eighty. This is merely an indication of how everything I have written in this book has helped me and is still helping me.

gracefully

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and ageing gracefully.***

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CHAPTER 3

HAVING A VIBRANT AND GRACEFUL MINDSET



Your mindset plays a very important role in the quality of your life. The Bible tells us,

“...as he thinketh in his heart, so is he”
Proverbs 23:7

The way you think affects the way your life goes. It is therefore very important that you have a very vibrant and dynamic mindset if you want to live and age gracefully.

Now, even though having a vibrant and graceful mindset is something everybody needs to have, in this chapter, my focus will largely be on the need for women to have a vibrant and graceful mindset.

Many women do not know how wonderful and special they are, and not having this understanding is affecting them a great deal. Women are God's soft spot, and we are divinely designed for relationships.

Do you know that research carried out with brain scans has revealed that female brains function differently from those of males? That is God for you, showing you how special and unique women are. Little wonder women are highly intuitive and very versatile. This is all the more reason why every woman must carry herself with pride, poise, and dignity. We must be ever willing to offer our bodies unto God as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to Him, as this is our spiritual act of worship (Rom. 12:1). We must be very committed to taking care of both our minds and our bodies, so we can be as fit and fruitful in fulfilling God's will and purpose for our lives.

I want to show you various things you must be willing to do if you want to have a vibrant and graceful mindset:

(1) Always be positive and optimistic about life.

Your attitude towards life will determine the kind of impact and value you will derive from life. As a woman,

no matter how tough and challenging things may be, you cannot afford to be down, dejected, and discouraged about life. You must always be positive, hopeful, and optimistic about life. Things are going to get better, and things are going to work out. The grace of God is available and sufficient for you.

Don't be too quick to arrive at negative conclusions and resign yourself to fate, saying, "Whatever will be, will be." No! It is what you demand out of life that you will get from it. It is what you believe about life that you will make out of it. Like our Archbishop M. E. Benson Idahosa usually says, "If you believe it, you will become it." This means you can become whatever you want to become, if only you are willing to believe it. You can solve that problem and overcome that challenge, no matter how difficult and impossible it may seem.

There are women like you who have faced what you're facing now, and they have overcome. There is no reason why you cannot face it and overcome it too. Do you know that just as we carry babies in our bodies and birth them into the world, as women, God also expects us to carry various dreams and visions in our minds and birth them into the world? But if we are not positive

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from life.***

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and optimistic people, we will continue to abort and dismiss the dreams and visions God puts on our hearts because of the difficulties and challenges we are facing.

I believe that women are supposed to be the most optimistic and hopeful people in the world. We are the ones who should always give hope and encouragement to our husbands and children. Learn to tell yourself that you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you, and that all things are possible with God.

I have also noticed that the Bible is full of several admonitions for women. Take a look at these scriptures:

"1 Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion."

Isaiah 52:1-2

"Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called."

Isaiah 54:1-5

When you are optimistic and positive as a woman, you will be committed to doing what is best to take care of

your health and be in a good state of mind and body always. You will be committed to eating healthy, exercising, and getting rid of anything that can be harmful to your system and well-being.

(2) Always read and be willing to learn

There is no way you can have a vibrant and graceful mindset if you are not willing to read and learn a lot. I love reading so much that every morning, after our devotion, I spend quality time reading. I have made it a point of duty to finish reading my Bible from cover to cover every year. To achieve this, I read a minimum of 4 chapters of the Bible every day. By reading more than 4 chapters a day, one can finish reading the Bible in less than a year.

I don't just read my Bible and other good books and publications; I commit myself to studying, meditating, and memorizing. I do this because I know that I am not just reading for reading's sake. I want the things I am reading to be part of me so they can transform me and manifest in my life. I want to learn new things that I can apply to my life to become the best version of myself.

My passion for reading developed as I was growing up as a young girl. I liked English in school, and I enjoyed reading out loud and very fast, especially in church. There are times we had to read fast to cover a lot of passages in a short time. Such times were always exciting and fascinating for me. It was my passion for knowledge that also made me go back to school (University of Port Harcourt) in 1995 to earn a B.Ed degree, even after having 6 children.

I believe that nobody is too old to learn. The more you learn, the more vibrant and successful you will become. The world is changing every day with new ideas and technologies emerging. People are discovering better ways of living and doing things. There is no reason why you should be left behind in the growth and development taking place in the world around you.

You must be willing to give yourself to relevant training. My passion for learning also led me to attend the "Chaplaincy Training," a Paramilitary training that both spiritual and physical discipline are enforced. I was privileged to enrol into Haggai Institute to enrich my scope of influence via knowledge. It was indeed

refreshing and purpose-driven for nourishment and establishment in the Christian faith. You will agree with me that learning must remain constant in life. Archbishop B.A. Idahosa of blessed memory said, "We start to die the moment we stop to learn. How true?

(3) Be willing to try new things and take risks

Another dimension of learning and growing is being willing to try new things and take risks. There are several areas of life where one can apply this principle, but one I would like to focus on right now is in the use of technology.

The world is changing rapidly, and there are a lot of technological innovations and advancements taking place every day. Technology is making it so much easier to learn, communicate with others, share your message or ideas, and achieve several things, including doing business. If you are not up-to-date with these technological advancements, you will find yourself missing out on so many good things. I believe you must have heard about the kind of things many people are doing with AI these days.

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I therefore decided that I was not going to lag in understanding and making use of technology. So, I took it upon myself to learn as much as I could about emerging digital innovations like social media and various devices and gadgets. This is why, when I am chatting with people on social media, you will see me sending emojis in almost every sentence. Some time ago, my daughter told me about a post she did on LinkedIn, and I decided to go on LinkedIn, search her out, and then liked and commented on her post. She was so shocked when she saw my likes and comments, and she called me to ask how I did it.

It really excites me to learn and do new things. Many times, I may not know what I am doing, and I don't have anybody to teach me, but I am just willing to take the risk to touch and try to figure things out. Before I know it, it works, and everything looks so beautiful. I made up my mind that I won't allow myself to miss out while everybody around me is "Techy" and achieving so much with tech. I apply this to other areas of life also. For example, my husband and I are discovering some new health benefits and cures that can be derived from fruits like bananas, plantain, paw-paw stems, and leaves. I can tell you that being willing to try new things and take risks this way has helped me a lot.

(4) Dress well and carry yourself with dignity

It is said that looking good is good business. I absolutely agree with this. Just like keeping the body fit, it is also very important to always dress as smart and excellent as possible. Most times, when people see the way I dress, they are amazed at how smart I look, and they find it hard to believe my age. This credibility has given room to people calling Mama TTT, Authentic Mama, Mama Africa, Mama Young, to mention but few. This can only be God, as I remain loyal to my adorable fans. I like to point out here that the traditional wrapper/headgear we inherited from our mothers contributed greatly to our outlook then. This challenged me to sensitize the womenfolk around me for a radical change. God was in it all. I believe that CGMI Praise Centre men of the late 70s to 90s can attest to it, because the taste of the pudding is in the eating.

I believe that as a woman, it is very important that you dress smartly and carry yourself with poise. When one attends parties/occasions and sees how some women are dressed, one will be disgusted to see women looking more like mothers with their sons rather than husbands. Thank God things have changed

considerably, the old giving place to the new. But please modern women we are admonished to dress the way we should be addressed. Period. When I noticed this, I took it upon myself to sensitize women about it and encourage them to improve the way they dress. I encourage them to wear smart gowns instead of tying wrappers all the time. Even if they have to wear traditional outfits, they can be sewn in a smart and decent way. This is another reason I like to encourage women and help them to keep fit and be in good shape. Because when, for example, their tummies are bloated, certain gowns would not fit them.

Your dress doesn't have to be expensive. What matters is how fitting and elegant it looks on you. I have heard of impressive comments some young ladies made when they saw the way I dressed during my children's wedding. Some people have become so inspired by my way of dressing that they always want to dress the way I do. In 2023, I had an eye surgery that compelled me to wear protective dark shades. To some women, it became an obvious fashion. Yes, you heard me right.

The scripture says, "Man looks at the outward appearance and God looks at the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7). This does not in any way mean that we should not be concerned with our outward appearance. Rather, this should make us take our outward appearance very seriously because God has sent us to men, and if our appearance is not pleasant to them, they may not give us audience or receive whatever impact we desire to make in their lives.

gracefully

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CHAPTER 4

MAINTAIN A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD



Having a good relationship with God is very vital if you truly want to live and age gracefully. God is the source of our life, and it's only by knowing Him and following His ways that we can truly sustain and experience life as we are meant to.

My experience with God began as I grew up with my Dad in Cross Rivers State, Nigeria. My Dad wasn't a Christian, but he put us in a catholic school. After he died, my siblings and I were brought to his senior sister's house. They were Anglicans, so we had to drop everything we had learnt in the catholic church. We were taught new doctrines, and eventually, in 1973, I met with the Lord and accepted Jesus as my Lord and Saviour. From that moment, my life took a new turn for good. I have not been the same again.

My passion to get deeper in my knowledge of God led me to attend a Bible School. I also joined the Intercessors for Nigeria, and we travelled in and outside the country to various countries like France and Kenya, to attend wonderful programs. In 1990, I was privileged to travel with the Archbishop Benson Idahosa to the United States of America for a conference. It was a very glorious trip.

I want to share a few things that will help you maintain a good relationship with God.

(A) PRAY AND COMMUNICATE WITH GOD REGULARLY

Prayer is the foundational way to communicate with God and build your relationship with Him. Just as I believe in being authentic in my relationship with people, I believe in being very real, open, and down-to-earth with God. And I reflect this a lot in the way I pray.

When I'm praying to God, I do not do it like I'm engaging in a certain religious ceremony. I talk to God just as I would talk to my father. I tell him what is on my mind, and I do not hold back in expressing myself and my desires to Him. My children often joke about how I pray. They say I pray to God as if I am having a gist with Him. The scriptures say,

"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."

James 4:8

When you are real and intimate with God, He will be real and intimate with you.

One sad thing I have noticed is that nowadays, many children don't like to pray or go to church. They prefer to spend time on phones and other gadgets. I think this is sad, because the Bible admonishes us to remember our Creator in the days of our youth (Eccl. 12:1) and to train up children in the way they should go (Prov. 22:6). The best time for children to know God and develop a good relationship is when they are young. There are so many distractions in this generation that are out to steal the hunger and passion for God from the hearts of people, especially the young ones.

When my husband and I were raising our children, instead of the usual festivities that marked the beginning of the year, we had fasting and prayers for the first three days of the year. We did this because we understood the importance of laying a good foundation for the year and laying a good foundation for our children. Laying a good foundation is very

gracefully

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***Having a good relationship
with God is very vital
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and age gracefully.***

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important if we want the best for our children and if we want the best out of life.

(B) LOVE AND READ GOD'S WORD A LOT

Here's what an anonymous author wrote about the Bible:

"It contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the fate of the sinner, and the happiness of the believer. It is a light to direct you, food to nourish you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's road map, the pilot's compass, the soldier's weapon, and the player's game plan. It is a MINE of credible wealth and a river of genuine joy. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Christ is its grand subject; your good, its design, and the glory of God, its end. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, practice it to be spiritually healthy. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. Let it fill your memory, rule your heart, and guide your steps. It is

given to you in life, will be open at the judgment, and will be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labour, and judge those who trifle with its sacred contents. The Bible is God's word, which shall stand forever."

Most of us respect the Bible. The problem is, we don't read it daily, and we don't put it into practice. After listening to a discussion on various translations of the Bible, a man said, "I prefer my mother's translation because she translated it into everyday life". Are you doing this in your life? Are you applying the things you read in the Bible to your life? Are you just reading the Bible like a story book? The Bible is God's manual for man's living. A man gave this remarkable testimony concerning the word of God. He said,

"Never compare the BOOK with other books. Never think or say that this BOOK contains the word of God. No, IT IS THE WORD OF GOD. PERIOD. It is supernatural in origin, eternal in duration, inexpressible in value, infinite

in scope, regenerative in power, infallible in authority, universal in interest, personal in application, and inspired in totality. So read it through, write it down, pray it in, work it out, and pass it on."

Friends, I can tell you with all boldness, that all that pertains to life, godliness, and ageing gracefully are contained in the HOLY BIBLE. As you read it, you will discover life's secrets in it. I bet you, you will grow and glow spiritually, physically, and otherwise. If you ignore the Bible, you will end up in the mortuary instead of living in God's sanctuary. Proverbs 21:16 says,

"The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead."

(C) SPEND TIME TO PRAISE AND WORSHIP GOD

Praising God should be our greatest desire in life. Remember Paul and Silas? (Acts 16:25-26) Praise broke all the chains and opened the doors. It is the strategy for victory, healing, deliverance, breakthroughs, etc. We all need this garment of praise, no matter our age (Isa. 61:3). An old preacher said, "God got caught up in

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*Are you applying
the things you read in the
Bible to your life?*

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the praises of Paul and Silas, that He began to tap His big foot, which caused the earthquake."

Another preacher said,

"Friend if I were God, your body will always be 18, you could eat anything and maintain perfect weight, your middle-aged wife would have the face and figure of an angel, your mid-life husband thick and handsome with debonair face, your youngster very intelligent like Einstein, your teens co-operative, logical and consistent, the weather will be determined by me - day and night; controlled as I like. Alas. I'm not God, so we age, gain weight, struggle raising kids, go through high and low waters, and put up with difficult people. Welcome to the Roller Coaster Ride of life. Why not give Him praise for what He does?"

One major reason why David was a man after God's heart was that he loved to praise and worship God. Praising and worshipping God is another way we draw near to God, and He draws near to us. It makes the

presence of God more real and tangible to us. Whenever you have the privilege to praise and worship God, always do it with all your heart. Worship God in spirit and in truth because he is seeking those who will worship Him this way (John 4:23).

(D) MAKE GOD YOUR PRIORITY IN LIFE

"Therefore, take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 6:31-33

If you want to maintain a good relationship with God, you must make Him the priority of your life. Do not allow anything else to take His place in your life. Be serious with God and make Him the center of your life. Let everything you do be centered on Him and on pleasing Him.

Be baptized with God's Spirit and always follow the leading of the Spirit. When you do this, even when you go astray, the Holy Spirit will redirect you.

If you humble yourself and become committed in your life and walk with God, you will enjoy His grace in your life. Here's an acronym for GRACE I love so much: God's Riches At Christ's Expense. Grace is the outward reflection of the inner workings of the power of God in your life. It's a reflection of the beauty and influence of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God in you, producing acceptability, advantage, favour, joy, liberality, gift, and pleasure.

Every one of us has been given grace in abundance, but the measure or degree to which it is seen and reflected through you is dependent on our attitude towards our relationship with God (Rom 5:17). 2 Peter 1:2 shows us how the grace of God can be multiplied in our lives through the knowledge of God and Jesus Christ. This means that the more you know Jesus and you grow in your relationship with Him, the more the grace of God will grow and multiply in your life.

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a good relationship with God,
you must make Him
the priority of your life.*

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anything else to take His
place in your life.*

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CHAPTER 5

LIVE A LIFE OF IMPACT



Your life is a gift from God, and how you live it is a gift to Him and the coming generations. If you want to bring great joy to God's heart and become a blessing to your generation, you must decide to live a life of impact. A life that inspires and positively influences the lives of others. Two major things that I believe can help you live a life of impact are:

1. Be passionate about your gifting.
2. Value Community and Relationships.

BE PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUR GIFTING

You will never have real success with anything until you become passionate about it. The Psalmist wrote,

"My heart is steadfast O God."

Psalms 57:7

To be steadfast means to have a commitment as strong as a rock. Henry Ford was passionate about automobiles. Thomas Edison was passionate about light, and the Wright Brothers were passionate about flying. Paul in the Bible was passionate about evangelism. What are you passionate about? You will only be remembered in life for what you were passionate about. Jesus knew He was born for man's salvation, and He was willing to die for it (John 18:37).

When what you love begins to consume your mind, thoughts, conversations, and your schedules, you are headed for success. You must discover what you are passionate about and what energizes you. Something worthy of building your life around. Jesus did, and He won the world. You too can. When you discover it and serve it to your generation, your life will be one of great impact. Your gift is a platform given to you to serve your generation.

Jesus, who is God, came down stooping so low to wash the lowest, dirtiest, and smelliest part of the body. Keep that picture in mind as you serve your gift to others. Christ saw so much value in the least, the last, the lost, and the lowest that He came to redeem them.

Today, He wants you to go out of your way to serve others. Unfortunately, what many people do today in the name of service or ministry is more of manipulation. God is always more interested in your attitude than your achievement or accolades.

When I discovered my gifting and what I was passionate about, I decided to serve it diligently to my generation. I decided I was going to make the world a better place because I came.

In my teaching profession, I was very passionate about transforming and impacting the lives of my students. I mostly taught the lower classes, and I ensured that no one in my class was a dullard. My students were graded from A to C in terms of their performance, and I spent more time with the group C children. I was determined to ensure that every learner did well and no learner was left behind.

When we had five arms in Primary 1, all of my students were at the top of the class in performance. None came below the half mark.

I would often sit back in school with learners who were struggling with their studies, and I did all I could to

gracefully

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*You will never have
real success with anything
until you become
passionate about it.*

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ensure they learnt and understood what was being taught. Several times, the mothers of such children would come to the school to appreciate me for my efforts in helping their children perform better. They were often amazed at the extra efforts I was making and how I was willing to stay behind and spend more time with their children.

During our Silver Jubilee celebration in 1976, I was taken aback by the appearance of a man who was a young school boy in the late 60s, but now turned a successful man of God - indeed a founder of his ministry. He traced me from my husband's office (SHELL WARRI) with my maiden name. How desperate he was to tell of God's faithfulness in his life, through my love and encouragement in his primary school days.

His name is Peter Kagho Omomadia and many people knew him as a truant and a bully. He was a lot bigger in stature than most of the students in his class. When he came to my class, I called him, and after I interviewed him, I found out that his actions were just a reaction to the negative way he had been treated while growing up. I encouraged him and decided to treat him right. I

made him a class prefect, and I always spoke highly of him. Before long, his attitude began to change. He settled down and became more serious with his studies. To everyone's amazement, he began to pick up and pass very well in his tests and exams. I am so grateful to God for the privilege I had to make an impact on his life. Time would fail me to mention more of such stories.

When I retired from teaching in 1993, the gifts I received from parents and students were so many that it looked like the gifts a couple receives during their wedding ceremony. They didn't want me to go. In 2012, I travelled to the UK, and I met some of my past students. When the others heard I was around, they began inviting me to their houses to host and appreciate me.

By the grace of God, I have also served and made various impacts in the Christian Women Fellowship International (CWFI) and the women conventions and programs of other ministries. As I mentioned at the beginning, the inspiration for this book came from an article I was told to write about aging gracefully as evidenced by my continual keep-fit exercises at such

times. In CWFI, I was a Chorister and later became the Choir mistress before veering into March Past Drills. I did produce tapes/ CDs with the MAKARINA rhythm dance steps, which were carried by attendees into various Nations represented at the Convention. The March Past Drills became my signature. I was known as Mama Makarina. It's an honour and a blessing to see that those efforts to help people stay healthy caught on. I smile with fulfillment, each time I see women doing march pasts at various conventions. To God be all the glory.

VALUE COMMUNITY AND RELATIONSHIPS

Life is not meant to be lived in isolation. Everything in life is connected. There's nothing that exists on its own or for itself. We must acknowledge the fact that people are different from us. Do not convey a message that people are not acceptable because they are not like-minded. It can be hard to step outside our comfort zone and include people who are different from us, but that is how God has designed us to live and relate with others.

Do not look down on people because they are less intelligent than you. Do not make assumptions and

relate with only the well-spoken, financially well-to-do, and the famous. Do not condemn people because they are ex-addicts/convicts, or they once attempted suicide. When we do this, we are exercising conditional love. Accept things and people the way they are, and let people give you the credibility that pleases God alone. There is no better exercise for strengthening your heart than stooping to lift someone else.

Encourage yourself and be a person who also encourages others. David exemplified this (I Sam 30:6). One of the ways to encourage others is to commend and appreciate them. William James said, "The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated. Praise becomes valuable only if you impart it."

People will enjoy being around you when you are a person who gives them joy and comfort. This is why I like to encourage people, and I also like to create fun and make valuable input in their lives. I always like people to feel better than the way they did before they met me. There is never a dull moment when you are around me. I believe it is God who put this desire in me, and I want it to spread to others. There is so much

gracefully

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connected.*

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negativity in the world that everyone needs to have people who encourage them and lift their spirits every now and then. My husband and I also give to others a lot. We believe in showing love through our actions and helping people have better experiences in life.

Now, in a bid to value community and relationships, we must still be very careful about the kind of friends we keep. You must ensure that you have friends who influence you positively. You don't need to have too many friends. I do not have many friends, and most of my friends are much younger than me. My friends are people who help me grow and become more of who God wants me to be. We share the truth of life together. Have reliable friends. Friends who can stand with you through thick and thin. Not fair-weather friends who are only around you because of what they can gain from you.

About Marriage

I want to share a few tips with you about marriage. For your marriage to succeed, you and your spouse must be willing to understand and help each other. Don't be indifferent towards your spouse because of how

stubborn they are. Do all you can to encourage them to know and do the right thing. Pray for your spouse and pray with your spouse. Ask God for His wisdom on how to relate and better the life of your spouse. When you help your spouse see themselves in a better way and become a better version of themselves, they will forever be indebted to you. Don't be bitter towards your spouse, and don't attempt to frustrate or tear them down.

Always do everything together as a couple. My husband and I always eat together. We work together on his farm, and he also assists me in the kitchen and in taking care of the house. As I mentioned in an earlier chapter, one thing I really appreciate my husband for is how he pulled me out of the stress I was subjecting myself to while working. I struggled with that decision because I didn't see what he was seeing. But when I finally gave in and resigned, I began to see and understand why he made that decision. I am forever grateful to him for doing this for me. That's why I call him my "Bobo for life." I don't know what would have become of me if I continued labouring under that stress.

Beloved, the journey of ageing gracefully is a gift from God, and it is meant to be lived with intention. Within you lies treasure - gifts, talents, wisdom, and experiences that the world is waiting for. Do not keep them hidden. Touch lives, bless others, and leave every place better than you met it.

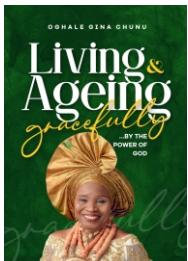
Take what you have learned from these pages and put it into practice. Let these truths guide your choices, strengthen your body, renew your mind, and draw you closer to God each day. Return to these words when you need encouragement, and share them with others who need hope.

It is my heartfelt prayer that you will not merely exist, but truly live - a life of health, joy, purpose, and impact. May the grace of God carry you through every season, and may your years shine brighter and brighter to His glory.

Go, live fully, and age gracefully by the power of God.

"An Octogenarian's tips for a healthy life"

THE BOOK



At 83, Chunu Oghale Gina is vibrant, active, and purpose-driven - a living testament that ageing can be beautiful when anchored in faith. In *Living and Ageing Gracefully by the Power of God*, this inspiring octogenarian shares timeless wisdom, practical health tips, and faith-filled principles that have kept her strong in body, mind, and spirit.

From daily aerobics to deep spiritual intimacy, she reveals how to live fully, stay relevant, and grow older with joy and dignity. This heartfelt guide encourages readers of all ages to embrace ageing not with fear, but with faith. If you desire a life of strength, impact, and grace - regardless of your age - this book is your companion. Let Mama Gina's story inspire you to live well and finish strong. If you want to age with strength and purpose, this is your blueprint.

THE AUTHOR



Rev. Mrs. Oghale G. Chunu is a seasoned educationist, certified wellness advocate, and transformational leader. She holds a B.Ed from the University of Port Harcourt and dedicated over 35 years to shaping young lives as a teacher. With more than 40 years of service in education and ministry, she continues to inspire as a wellness trainer and community nurturer.

Her passion for excellence, compassion, and vibrant personality have earned her respect locally and internationally, including missions alongside Archbishop Benson Idahosa to the United States. She remains a beacon of hope, leadership, and lifelong commitment to people's growth.

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