The miracle healing

that never was

ON MANY OCCASIONS, people or interviewers ask me what my lowest moment

in life is. I have about 10. Recently, one was literally brought home.

I saw preacher Reinhard Bonnke’s TV advertisement and my mind went back 26-or-so years ago. I had heard that he was coming to the country. He was known to pray for all kinds of ailments, including Aids. I badly wanted to be healed of this condition, whatever the cost. There was one hitch: distance. His

crusade would be held in Kisumu. I was penniless, so I lied to a friend that I had been invited to another nursing school.

The only obstacle was Sh800. She had been very sympathetic that

at my age, and having gone to secondary school together, my life was in tatters. I never told her that I had HIV,

which at that time was as good as telling someone you were dead.

“If I get the money, I’ll return with an admission number and join college next year,” I lied.

**Long road to healing**

I boarded the eight o’clock train to

Kisumu, set for healing the following

day at the town’s stadium, never mind

that I had never set foot in Kisumu.

There were many unwelcome things

on the train, but I did not allow myself

to be distracted. Women who boarded

along the way came with “schools” of

children. As a result, each Nairobi-to-

Kisumu passenger, including me, was

allocated a sleeping infant.

We fed and changed the babies’ nappies,

and since I had not carried an extra

dress, I had to be extra careful not to

soil it. On reaching Kisumu, it was not

hard to know the crusade’s venue. I followed

a big crowd that was headed to

the stadium. I wondered if there were

people in the crowd infected with HIV,

or whether I was the only one.

**Falling faith**

We sat in the scorching sun and waited. It was reassuring to hear other

people’s testimonies. Although most

people spoke Dholuo, some explained

in English how their friends in Nairobi

had benefited from Bonnke. I planned

to approach the altar immediately

Bonnke started preaching because if

I waited for the altar call, the crowd

would be overwhelming. This worked

perfectly. I was about five metres from

where he was fanning the healing cloth,

making people to fall. I did not fall. I

never felt a “power” pushing me to the

ground. Or perhaps it is because I did

not allow people to fall on me, creating

a domino effect.

All the same, I had faith that I was

healed.

**Testing the waters**

I think I felt different, or I imagined

that I felt different. But I had to do

one thing: confirm my healing. All the

tests were done at the Kenya Medical

Research Institute (Kemri). I went there

figuring what to say if I found the same

person who had tested me the last time.

I mean, if I had tested HIV-positive, why

would I want to retest? Luckily, there

was a new man. I think they did not

have computer data. I told him I was

planning to travel abroad to study and

one of the requirements was to test for

HIV. He was very upset that an embassy

could ask for such a test from an innocent

girl like me who was the picture of

perfect health.

**Ignorance is bliss**

Back then, test results took eight

days, but I believed that I was HIV-free.

I even wrote a lengthy letter to my

school, arguing my case for re-admission.

“I doubt I was HIV-infected in the

first place. I will let you test me again to

confirm I am HIV-free and allow me to

complete my studies,” I wrote.

I imagined myself going back to class

in the stripped green uniform. Only this

time I vowed it would be strictly studies.

When I entered the small office, I

did not need to be told what was up. I

could read the result from the person’s

face. He told me he wanted to do another

test because he could not believe

that this young and beautiful girl had

contracted the deadly virus. I allowed

him to draw another blood sample. But

I did not go back for the result. My die

had been cast.

**New healing**

When I saw Reinhard Bonnke’s advert

recently, I could not help but tell my

family what happened all those years

ago. I do not hate this man of God. I

only hate to remember that time because

everything was without form or

shape. Now I am grateful that God has

healed my mind and given me amazing

grace to live with this thorn in my flesh.

If you want to know my lowest moment,

it was when I was “HIV-negative”

for eight blissful days.

This is the diary of Asunta Wagura, a

mother-of-five who tested HIV-positive

25 years ago. She is the executive director

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